Cockerell

Oct 14 1911

Dear Madan,

Mr Thomas Hardy has entrusted me with the distribution of some of his manuscripts, for which he is continually being offered big prices for American collections. I have set aside for the Bodleian, with his approval, 'Poems of the Past & Present'. Will you kindly let me know whether it will be acceptable.

Yours sincerely

Sydney C. Cockerell

Oct 17 1911

Dear Mr Nicholson,

I am sending Thomas Hardy's MS. by registered parcels post - You will find inside it an extract from a letter from Hardy relating to the gift -

I was under the impression that you were still away - I hope you have come back from your holiday refreshed & invigorated -

Yours sincerely

Sydney C. Cockerell

Oct 18 1911

Dear Madan,

Many thanks for your letter - the Librarian's answer was satisfactory and the MS. should have reached the Bodleian this morning -

Yours ever

S C Cockerell

I am rather appalled at the temerity of presenting these MS MSS. & I should much like it to appear on each record or label in some way either that they were presented through you, at your wish or suggestion, or presented to you to distribute as you should choose.

It would, I feel, not be quite becoming for a writer to send his MSS. to a Museum on his own judgment.

Extract from letter from Thomas Hardy to S. C. Cockerell Oct 11 1911

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Poems
of
The Past and The Present.

By
Thomas Hardy.

A. BODLEY

Foreword

Preface.

Herewith I tender my thanks to the editors & proprietors of the Times, the Morning Post, the Daily Chronicle, the Westminster Gazette, Literature, the Graphic, Cornhill, Sphere, & other papers, for permission to reprint from their pages such of the following pieces of verse as have already been published.

Of the subject-matter of this volume (which is in other than narrative form, much is dramatic or personative even where not explicitly so. Moreover, ~~both in presentation & in philosophy,~~ that portion which may be regarded as individual comprises a series of feelings & fancies written down in widely differing moods & circumstances, & at various dates. It will probably be found, therefore, to possess little cohesion of thought or harmony of colouring. Unadjusted impressions have their value, & I do not greatly regret this. ~~For it may be considered~~ and the road to a true philosophy of life seems to lie in humbly recording divergent readings of its phenomena as they are forced upon us by chance & change.

T. H.

August: 1901.

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V. R. 1819-1901

A Reverie

Moments he mightiest pass uncalendared,
And when he Absolute
In ~~Silence agone~~ Time out ~~Backward~~ gave the deedful word
Whereby all life is stirred:
"Let one be born & known whose mould shall constitute
The norm of every royal ~~valued~~ reckoned attribute";
No mortal knew or heard.

But in due days he purposed Life outshone –
Serene, sequacious, free –
Her waxing ~~octobers~~ seasons bloomed
~~Humanance agin accumbered~~ with deeds well done,
And he world's heart was won...
Yet may he deed of hers most bright in eyes to be
Lie hid from ours – as in he All-One's thought lay she –
Till ripening years have run.

Sunday night.
27 January 1901.

War Poems.

Embarcation.

(Southampton Docks, October, 1899)

Here, where Vespasian's legions struck the sands,
And Cerdic with his Saxons entered in,
And Henry's army leapt afloat to win
Convincing triumphs over neighbour lands,

Vaster battalions press for further strands,
To argue in the selfsame bloody mode
Which this late age of thought, & pact, & code,
Still fails to mend. — Now ~~steppest each war-troop~~ seawards tramp the bands ~~strands~~,

Yellow as autumn leaves, alive as spring;
And as each host draws out upon the sea
Beyond which lies the tragical To-be,
None dubious of the cause, none murmuring,

Wives, sisters, parents, wave white hands & smile,
As if they knew not that they weep the while.

Departure.

(Southampton Docks: October, 1899)

While we far farewell music thins & fails,
And we broad bottoms sip we bearing brine —
All smalling slowly to we gray sea line* —
And each significant red smoke-shaft pales,

Keen
A sense of severance everywhere prevails,
Which shapes we late ~~long~~ long tramps of mourning men
To seeming-words that ask & ask again:
"How long, O striving Teutons, Slavs, & Gaels

Must your wroth reasonings ~~feed~~ trade on lives like these,
That are as puppets in a playing hand?
When shall we saner softer ~~englobing~~ politics
Whereof we dream, ~~take shape~~ have play in each ~~our~~ proud land,
And patriotism, grown Godlike, scorn to stand
Bondslave to realms, but circle earth & seas?"

The Colonel's Soliloquy.

(Southampton Docks: October, 1899)

Haslam

"The quay recedes. Hurrah! Ahead we go!.....
It's true I've been accustomed now to home,
And joints get rusty, & one's limbs may grow
More fit to rest than roam.

"But I can stand as yet ~~fair~~ stress & strain:
There's not a little steel beneath the rust;
My years mount somewhat, but here's to't again!
And if I fall, I must.

"God knows that for myself I've scanty care;
Past scrimmages have proved as much to all;
In Eastern lands & South I've had my share
Both of the blade & ball.

"And where those villains ripped me in the flitch
With their old iron in my early time,
I'm apt at change of ~~season~~ wind to feel a twitch,
Or at a change of clime.

And

"And when my mirror shows me in the morning
Has ~~when~~ more of blotch & wrinkle than of bloom;
My eyes, too, heretofore all glasses scorning,
Have just a touch of rheum .....

"Now sounds 'The Girl I've left behind me',— Ah,
The years, the ardours, wakened by that tune!
Time was when, with the crowds' farewell 'Hurrah!'
I would lift me to the moon.

"But now it's late to leave behind me one
Who if, poor soul, her man goes underground,
Will not recover as she might have done
In ~~years~~ days when hopes abound.

"She's waving from the wharfside, palely grieving,
As down we draw.... Her Tears make little show,
Yet now she suffers more than at my leaving
Some ~~thirty~~ twenty years ago!

"I pray those left at home will care for her!
I ~~may~~ shall come back; I have before; ~~but~~ though when
The Girl you leave behind you is a grandmother
Things may not be as then."

The Going of the Battery. I Wives' Lament.

(November 2, 1899)

i

O it was sad enough, ~~Best we were~~ weak~~ness~~ enough.
Light in their loving as soldiers can be —
First to risk choosing them, ~~let~~ leave alone losing them
Now, in far battle, beyond the South Sea!.....

ii

— Rain ~~drifted~~ came down drenchingly; but we unblenchingly
Trudged on beside them through mirk & through mire,
They stepping steadily — only too readily! —
Scarce as if stepping brought parting-time nigher.

iii

— Great guns were gleaming there, living things seeming there,
Cloaked in their tar-cloths, upmouthed to the night;
Wheels wet & yellow from axle to felloe,
Throats blank of sound, but prophetic to sight.

iv.

Gas-glimmers drearily, blearily, eerily,
Lit our pale faces outstretched for one kiss,
While we stood prest to them, with a last quest to them
Not to count perils that honour could miss.

Sharp

V.

Sharp were those sighs of ours, blinded these eyes of ours,
When at last moved away under the arch
All we loved. Aids for them each woman prayed for them,
Treading back slowly the track of their march.

VI

Someone said: "Nevermore will they come: evermore
Are they now lost to us." O it was wrong!
Though may be hard their ways, some Hand will guard their ways,
Bear them through safely, in brief time or long.

VII

—Yet, voices haunting us, daunting us, taunting us,
Hint in the night-time when life beats are low
Other & graver things..... Hold we to braver things,
Wait we, in trust, what Time's fullness shall show.

At the War Office, London.

(Affixing the Lists of Killed & Wounded: December, 1899)

i

Last year I called this world of gaingivings
The darkest thinkable, & questioned sadly
If my own land could leave its pulse less gladly,
So charged it seemed with circumstance whence springs
The tragedy of things.

ii

Yet at that censured time no heart was rent
Or feature blanched of parent, wife, or daughter,
By hourly blazoned sheets of listed slaughter:
Death waited Nature's wont; Peace smiled unshent
From Ind to Occident.

A Christmas Ghost-story.

~~(December, 1899)~~

South of the Line, inland from far Durban,
~~A mouldering soldier lies~~
~~there he be or not~~ your countryman)
~~A wizzy and doubled up Riddled~~ are his gray bones,
And ~~mock~~ the breeze his puzzled phantom moans
Nightly to clear Canopus: "I would know
By whom and when the All-Earth-gladdening Law
Of Peace, brought in by that Man Crucified,
Was ruled to be inept, & set aside?
And what of logic or of truth appears
In tacking 'Anno Domini' to the years?
Near twenty hundred liveries thus have lied,
But tarries yet the ~~promised~~ Cause for which He died".

December 23. 1899.

The Dead Drummer.

i.

They throw in Drummer Hodge, to rest
Uncoffined – just as found:
His landmark is a Kopje-crest
That breaks the Veldt around;
And foreign constellations west
Each night above his mound.

ii

Young Hodge the Drummer never knew –
Fresh from his Wessex home –
The meaning of the broad Karoo,
The Bush, the dusty loam,
And why uprose to nightly view
Strange stars amid the gloam.

iii

Yet portion of that unknown plain
Will Hodge for ever be;
His homely Northern breast and brain
Grow up a Southern tree,
And strange-eyed constellations reign
His stars eternally.

A Wife in London. (December 1899)

i. ~~Overnight~~ The ~~Same~~ Tragedy.

She sits in the tawny vapour
That the City lanes have uprolled,
Behind whose webby fold on fold
Like a waning taper
The street-lamps glimmers cold.

A messenger's knock cracks smartly.
Flashed news is in ~~my~~ her hand.
Of meaning it dazes to understand
Though shaped so shortly:
He – has fallen – in the far South Land.....

ii. ~~Next day. The Morrow~~ The Irony.

'Tis ~~Its~~ the morrow; the fog hangs thicker,
The postman nears & goes:
A letter is brought whose lines disclose
By the firelight flicker
His hand, whom the worm now knows:

Fresh – firm – penned in highest feather –
Page-full of his hoped return,
And of home-plans & jaunts by brake & burn
In the summer weather,
And of new love that ~~we~~ they would learn.

Williamson

The Souls of the Slain

i.

The thick lids of ~~the~~ Night closed upon me
Alone at the Bill
Off the Isle by the Race*
Many-caverned, bald, wrinkled of face—
And with darkness & silence the spirit was on me
To brood & be still.

ii.

No wind fanned the flats of the ocean,
Or promontory sides,
Or the ooze by the strand,
Or the bent-bearded slope of the land,
Whose base took its rest amid everlong motion
Of criss-crossing tides.

iii

Soon from out of the Southward seemed nearing
A whirr, as of wings
Waved by mighty-vanned flies,
Or by night-moths of measureless size,
And in softness & smoothness wellnigh beyond hearing
Of corporal things.

iv

* The "Race" is the turbulent sea-area off the Bill of Portland, where contrary tides meet.

iv.

And they bore to the bluff, & alighted —
A dim-discerned train
Of sprites without moulds,
Frameless souls none might touch or might hold —
On the ledge by the turreted lantern, far-sighted
By men of the main.

V.

And I heard them say "Home!" and I knew them
For souls of the felled
On the earth's nether bord
Under Capricorn, whither they'd warred,
And I neared in my awe, & gave heedfulness to them
With breathings inheld.

vi.

Then, it seemed, there approached from the northward
A senior soul-flame
Of the like filmy hue:
And he met them & spake: "Is it you,
O my men?" Said they, "Aye! We bear homeward and heartward
To list to our fame!"

VII

"I've flown here before you," he said then:
"Your households are well;
But — your kin linger less
On

On your glory & war-nightmares
Than on ~~other~~ dearer things." "~~Other~~ dearer?" cries these from the dead then,
Of what do they tell?"

VIII

"Some mothers muse sadly, & murmur
Your doings as boys —
Recall the quaint ways
Of your babyhood's innocent days.
Some pray that, ere dying, your faith had grown firmer,
And higher your joys.

IX.

"A father broods: 'Would I had set him
To some humble trade,
And so slacked his high fire,
And his passionate martial desire;
~~And~~ Had told him no stories to woo him & whet him
To this dire crusade!'"

X.

"And, General, how hold out our sweethearts,
Sworn loyal as doves?"
"Many mourn; many think
It is not unattractive to prink
Them in sables for heroes. Some fickle & fleet-hearts
Have found them new loves."

"And

xi.

"And our wives?" quoth another resignedly,
"Dwell they on our deeds?"
"Deeds of home; that live yet
Fresh as new – deeds of fondness or fret;
Ancient words that were kindly expressed or unkindly,
These, these have their heeds."

xii.

Alas! then it seems that our glory
Weighs less in their thought
Than our ~~simple~~ old homely acts,
And the long-ago commonplace facts
Of our lives – held by us as scarce part of our story,
And rated as nought!"

xiii

Then bitterly some: "Was it wise now
To raise the tomb-door
For such knowledge? Away!"
But the rest: "Fame we prized till to-day;
Yet that hearts keep us green for old kindness we prize now
A thousand times more!"

xiv.

Thus speaking, the crooped apparitions
Began to disband
And resolve them in Two:

Those

Those whose record was lovely & true
Bore to northward for home: those of bitter traditions
Again left the land,

XV.

And, towering to seaward in legions,
They paused at a spot
Overbending the Race —
That engulphing, ghast, sinister place —
Whither headlong they plunged, to the fathomless regions
Of myriads forgot.

XVI.

And the spirits of those who were homing
Passed on, rushingly,
Like the Pentecost Wind;
And the whirr of their wayfaring thinned
And surceased on the sky, & but left in the gloaming
Sea-mutterings & me.

December, 1899.

Song of the Soldiers' Wives

i.

At last? In sight of home again,
Of home again,
No more to range & roam again
As at that bygone time?
No more to go away from us
And stay from us? —
Dawn, hold not long the day from us,
But quicken it to prime!

ii.

Now all the town shall ring to them,
Shall ring to them,
And we who love them cling to them
And clasp them joyfully;
And cry, "O much we'll do for you
Anew for you,
Dear Loves! — aye, draw & hew for you,
Come back from overseea."

Some

iii

Some told us we should meet no more,
Should meet no more;
Should wait, & wish, but greet no more
Your faces round our fires;
That, in a while, uncharily
And drearily
Men gave their lives — even wearily,
Like those whom living tires.

iv.

And now you are nearing home again,
Dears, home again:
No more, maybe, to roam again
As at that bygone time
Which took you far away from us
To stay from us;
Dawn, hold not long the day from us,
But quicken it to prime!

The Sick God.

i.

In days when men had joy of war,
A god of Battles sped each mortal jar:
The peoples pledged him heart & hand
From Israel's land to isles afar.

ii

His crimson form, with clang & chime,
Flashed on each murk & murderous meeting-time,
And kings invoked, for rape & raid,
His fearsome aid in rune & rhyme.

iii

On bruise & blood-hole, scar & seam,
On blade & bolt, he flung his fulgid beam:
His haloes rayed the very gore,
And corpses wore his glory-gleam.

iv

Often an early King or ~~Duke he worshipped Bruce~~ Queen,
And stories hero-~~ff~~ onward, knew his ~~sheen~~ ~~within~~;
'Twas ~~glimpsed~~ eyed by Wolfe, ~~Wellington~~ by Ney anon,
And Nelson on his blue demesne.

v.

V.

But new light shone. That god's gold nimb
And blazon have waned dimmer & more dim;
Even this flushed form begins to fade,
Till but a shade is left of him.

VI.

That modern meditation broke
His spell, that ~~peiction of performers~~ performer's pleadings dealt a stroke,
Say some; & some that crimes too dire
Did much to mire his crimson cloak.

VII.

Yea, seeds of crescent sympathy
Were sown by those more excellent than he,
Long known, though long contemned till then —
The gods of men in amity.

VIII

Souls have grown seers, & thought outbrings
The mournful manysidedness of things.
With foes as friends, enfeebling ires
And fury-fires by gainsivings! —

IX

He scarce impassioned champions now;
They do & dare, but tensely — pale of brow;
And would they pain uplift the arm
Of that past form they know not-how.

X.

X.

Yet wars arise, though zest grows cold;
Wherefore, at whiles, as 'twere in ancient moulds
He looms, ~~out-etched~~ bepatched with ~~mag~~ paint & lath;
But never hath he seemed the old!

XI.

Let men rejoice, let men deplore,
The ~~Power predominant~~ lurid Deity
Succumbs to one of ~~nobler~~ saner mood;
The Battle-god is god no more.

B. 616

Poems of Pilgrimage.

Paterson

Genoa & the Mediterranean.

(March, 1887)

O epic-fames, god-haunted Central sea,
Heave careless of the deep wrong done to thee
When from ~~night~~ Torino's track I saw thy face first flash on me.

And multimarbled Genova the Proud,
Gleam all unconscious how, wide-lipped, up-browed,
I first beheld thee clad – not as the Beauty but the Dowd.

Out from a deep-delved way my vision lit
On housebacks pink, green, ochreous – where a slit
Shoreward 'twixt row & row revealed the ~~historic~~ ~~historied~~ classic blue through it.

And thereacross waved fishwives' high-hung smocks,
Chrome kerchiefs, scarlet hose, darned underfrocks;
Since when too oft my dreams of thee, O Queen, that drippery mocks.

Whereat I grieve, Superba!.... Afterhours
Within Palazzo Doria's orange bowers
Went far to mend these marrings of thy soul-subliming powers.

But

But, Queen, such squalid undress none should see,
Those dream-endangering eyewounds no more be
Where lovers first behold they form in pilgrimage to thee.

Shelley's Skylark.

(The neighbourhood of Leghorn: ~~April~~ March, 1887)

Somewhere ~~around~~ afield here something lies
In Earth's oblivious eyeless trust
That moved a poet to prophecies—
A pinch of unseen, unguarded dust:

—

The dust of the lark ~~which~~ that Shelley heard,
And made immortal through times to be;—
~~But~~ Though it
~~yet which~~ only lived like another bird,
And knew not its immortality.

Lived

Lives its meek life; then, one day, fell —
A little ball of feather & bone;
And how it perished, when piped farewell,
And where it wastes, are alike unknown.

Maybe it rests in the loam I view,
Maybe it ~~tingles~~ throbs in a myrtle's green,
Maybe it ~~sweets~~ sleeps in the coming tune
Of a grape on the slopes of yon inland scene.

Go find it, faeries, go & find
That tiny ~~speck~~ pinch of priceless dust,
And bring a casket silver-lined,
And framed of gold that gems encrust;

And we will lay it safe therein,
And consecrate it to endless time;
For it inspires a bard to win
Ecstatic heights ~~Heights unsurpassed~~ in thought & rhyme.

Dippie

Vica Castor caps

Long quarrel

In the Old Theatre, Fiesole.

(April, 1887)

I traced the Circus whose gray stones incline
Where Rome & dim Etruria interjoin,
Till ~~came~~ a child who showed ~~an~~ ancient coin
That bore the image of a Constantine.

She lightly passed; nor did she once opine
How, better than all books, she had raised for me
In swift perspective Europe's history
Through the vast years of Caesar's sceptred line.

For in my distant plot of English loam
'Twas best to delve, & straightway there to find
Coins of like ~~impress~~. As with one half blind
Whom common simples cure, her act flashed home
In that ~~brief~~ mute moment to my opened mind
The ~~words · imprinting power~~ of perished Rome.

Rome: On the Palatine.

(April, 1887)

We walked where Victor Jove was shrined awhile,
And passed to Livia's rich red mural show,
Whence, thridding cave & Criptoporticō,
We gained Caligula's dissolving pile:

And each ranked ruin tended to beguile
The outer sense, & shape itself as though
It wore its marble hues, its pristine glow
Of scenic frieze & pompous peristyle.

When lo, swift hands, on strings nigh overhead,
Began to melodize a waltz by Strauss:
It stirred me as I stood, in Caesar's house,
~~Roused~~ the old ~~souls~~ Imperial lyres ~~souls~~ had ~~stirred~~.

And blended pulsing life with lives long done,
Till Time seemed fiction, Past & Present one.

Rome. Building a new street in the Ancient quarter

(April, 1887)

These umbered cliffs & gnarls of masonry
Outskeleton ~~[illegible]~~ Time's central city, Rome;
Whereof each arch, entablature, & dome
Lies bare in all its gaunt anatomy.

And cracking frieze & rotten metope
Express, as though they were an open tome
Top-liners with ~~[illegible]~~ caustic monitory gnome;
" ~~[illegible]~~, Learn here to spell Humanity!"

And yet within these ruins' very shade
The singing workmen shape & set & join
Their frail ~~[illegible]~~ new mansion's stuccoed cove & quoin
With no apparent sense that years abrade,
Though each rent wall their feeble works invade
Once shamed all such in power of pier & groin.

~~In~~ Rome.

The Vatican. ~~Sabl~~ Sala delle Muse.

(1887)

I sat in the Muses' Hall at the mid of the day,
And it seemed to grow still, & the people to pass away,
And the chiselled shapes to combine in a haze of sun,
Till beside a Carrara column there gleamed forth One.

She was not this nor that of those beings divine,
But each & the whole – an essence of all the Nine;
With tentative foot she neared to my halting-place,
A pensive smile on her sweet, small, marvellous face.

"Regarded so long, we render ~~you~~ thee sad?" said she.
"Not you", sighed I, "but my own inconstancy!
I worship each & each; in the morning one,
And then, alas, another at ~~set~~ sink of sun."

"To-day my soul clasps Form; but where is my troth
Of yesternight with ~~Sound~~ Tune;
~~Song~~ If can one cleave to both?"
—"Be not perturbed," said she. "Though apart in fame,
As I & my sisters are one; those, too, are the same."

"But

"But my loves go further — to Story, & Dance, & Hymn,
No lover of all in a sun-sweep is fool to whim —
Is swayed like a river-weed as the ripples run!" —
"Nay, wight. Thou swayest not. These are but phases of one;

"And that one is I; & I am projected from thee,
One that out of thy brain & heart thou causest to be —
~~Hast composed to~~
Extern to thee nothing. Grieve not, nor myself recall,
Woo where thou wilt; & rejoice thou canst love at all."

~~In~~ Rome. At the Pyramid of Cestius. ¶ Near the Graves of Shelley & Keats. ¶ (April, 1887)

Then,
Who, was Cestius,
And what is he to me? —
Amid thick thoughts & memories multitudinous
One thought alone brings he.

I can recall no word
Of anything he did;
For me he is ~~but one~~ a man who died & was interred
To leave a pyramid

Whose

Whose purpose was expresst
Not ~~with~~ its first design,
Nor till, far down in Time, beside it found their rest
Two countrymen of mine.

—

Cestius in life, maybe,
~~Scourged~~ Slew, breathed out threatening;
I know not. This I know: in death all silently
He does a sweeter thing,

—

In beckoning pilgrim-feet
With marble finger high
To where, by shadowy wall & history-haunted street
Those matchless singers lie.....

—

—Say, then, he lived & died
That stones which bear his name
Should ~~count~~ mark, through Time, where two immortal Shades abide;
It is an ample fame.

~~At~~ Lausanne.

In Gibbon's old Garden: 11–12 P.M. June 27: 1897.

(The 110th Anniversary of the Completion of the "Decline & Fall" at the same hour & place.)

A Spirit seems to pass,
Formal in pose, but grave & grand withal:
He ~~glances from~~ contemplates a volume stout & tall,
And far lamps fleck him through the thin acacias.

Anon the book is closed,
With "It is finished!" And at the alley's end
He turns, & soon on me his glances bend;
And, as from earth, comes ~~words~~ speech — small, muted, yet composed.

"How fares the Truth now? — Ill?
— Do pens but slily further her advance?
May one not speed her but in phrase askance?
Do scribes aver the Comic to be Reverend still?

"Still rule those minds on earth
At whom sage Milton's wormwood words were hurled:
'Truth like a bastard comes into the world,
Never without ill-fame to him who gives her birth'? *

---

* Prose Works. "Doctrine & Discipline of Divorce"

Zermatt:
To the Matterhorn.

(June - July: 1897)

Thirty-two years since, up against the sun,
Seven shapes, ~~scarce traceable by~~ thin atomies to lower sight,
Laboringly leapt & gained thy gabled height,
And four lives paid for what the seven had won.

They were the first by whom ~~that~~ the deed was done,
And when I look at thee, my mind takes flight
To that day's tragic feat of manly might,
As though, till then, of history thou hadst none.

Yet ages ere men topped thee, late & soon
Thou watch'dst ~~each night~~ each year the planets lift & lower;
Thou gleam'dst to Joshua's pausing sun & moon,
And brav'dst the tokening sky when Caesars power
Approached its bloody end: yea, saw'st that Noon
When darkness filled the earth till the ninth hour.

The Bridge of Lodi *

(Visited ~ 23 April, 1887 : Battle fought May 10, 1796)

i

When of tender mind & body
I was moved by ~~melody~~ minstrelsy,
And that strain "The Bridge of Lodi"
Brought a strange delight to me.

ii

In the battle-breathing jingle
Of its forward-footing tune
I could see the armies mingle,
And the columns cleft & hewn

iii

On that far-famed ~~Bridge of~~ spot by Lodi
Where Napoleon clove his way
To his fame, when like a god he
Bent the nations to his sway.

iv

Hence the tune came capering to me
While I traced the Rhone & Po;
Nor could Milan's marvel woo me
From the spot englamoured so.

tnw

---

* pronounce "Loddy".

V.

And to-day, sun-lit & smiling
Here I stand upon the scene
With its saffron walls, dun tiling,
And its meads of maiden green,

VI.

Even as when the Crackway thunders
With the charge of grenadiers,
And the ~~thousand twenty~~ blood of forty hundred
Splashed its
~~Fell by~~ parapets & piers.....

VII

Any ancient crone I'd today
Like a lass in young-eyed prime,
Could she tell some tale of Lodi
At that moving mighty ~~same~~ time.

VIII

So, I ask the wives of Lodi
For traditions of that day:
But alas; not anybody
Seems to know of such a fray.

IX.

And they lead but transitory
Marketings in cheese & meat,
Till I judge that Lodi's story
Is extinct in Lodi's street.

Yet

Thorn

X.

Yet while here & there they thrid them
In their zest to sell & buy,
Let me sit me down amid them
And behold those thousands die.....

XI.

—Not a creature cares in Lodi
How Napoleon swept each arch,
Or where up & downward trod he,
Or for his memorial march!

XII.

So that wherefore stones I be here
Watching Adda ~~lock~~ lip he lea,
When the whole romance to see here
Is the dream I bring with me?

XIII

And why sing "The Bridge of Lodi"
As I sit thereon & swing,
When none shows by smile or nod he
Guesses why or what I sing?.....

XIV.

Since ~~the~~ all Lodi, ~~brough~~ low & head ones,
Seem to pass that story by,
It may be the Lodi-bred ones
Rate it truly, & not I.

And

XV.

Once engrossing Bridge of Lodi,
Is thy claim to glory gone?
Must I pipe a palinody
Or be silent thereupon?

XVI

And if here, from shard to steeple,
Be no stone to fame the fight;
Must I say the Lodi people
Are but viewing crime aright?....

XVII.

Nay; I'll sing "the Bridge of Lodi"—
That long-lovèd, romantic thing,
Though none show by smile or nod he
Guesses why & what I sing!

On an Invitation to the United States.

i.

My ardours for emprize nigh lost
Since ~~Being Stone~~ Life has bared its bones to me,
I shrink to seek a modern coast
Whose ripcr times have yet to be;
Where the new regions claim them free
From that long drip of human tears
Which ~~nations~~ peoples old in agony tragedy
Have ~~shed since first~~ left upon the centuried years.

ii.

For, ~~haunting~~ wonning in these ancient lands, *
Enchased & lettered ~~title~~ ... a tomb,
And scored with prints of perished hands,
And chronicled with dates of doom,
Though my own ~~bedding~~ Being bear no bloom
I trace the lives such ~~facts~~ scenes enshrine,
Give past exemplars present room,
And their experience count as mine.

Miscellaneous Poems.

The Mother Mourns.

When mid-Autumn's moan shook the night-time,
And sedges were horny,
And Summer's green wonderwork faltered
On leaze & in lane,

I ~~went~~ fared Yell'ham-~~Wood~~ Firs way, where dimly
Came wheeling around me
Those phantoms obscure & insistent
That shadows unchain.

Till airs from the needle-flicks brought me
A low lamentation,
As 'twere of a tree-god disheartened,
Perplexed, or in pain.

And, heeding, it awed me to gather
That Nature herself there
Was breathing in ~~Auble~~ aërie accents,
~~A~~ With direful ~~=~~ refrain,

~~Sad~~ Weary plaint that Mankind, in these late days
Had grieved her by holding
Her ancient high fame of perfection
In doubt & disdain .....

"I had not proposed me a creature
(She soughed) so excelling
All else of my kingdom in compass
And brightness of brain.

"As to read my defects with a god-glance,
Uncover each vestige
Of old inadvertence, annunciate
Each flaw & each stain!

"My purpose went not to develop
Such insight in Earthland.;
~~In Earth such insight~~
Such potent appraisements affront me
And saddan my reign!

"Why loosened I olden control here
To mechanize skywards,

Undeeming great scope could outshape in
~~This narrow champaign~~!
A globe of such grain!

"Man's mountings of mindsight I checked not,
Till range of his vision
Has topped my intent, & found blemish
Throughout my domain.

"He holds as inept his own soul-shell —
My deftest achievement —
Contemns me for fitful inventions
Ill-timed & insane:

"No more sees my sun as ~~the Godhead~~ a planet-
~~of godhead shape~~,
My moon as the ~~sky~~ Night-queen,
My stars as august & sublime ones
That influences rain:

"Reckons gross & ignoble my teaching,
Immoral my story,
My love-lights a ~~base~~ lure, that my species
May gather & gain.

" 'Give me', he her said, 'but the matter
And means the gods lot her,
My brain could evolve a creation
More seemly, more sane.'.....

"If ever a naughtiness seized me
To woo adulation
From creatures more keen than those crude ones
That first formed my train —

"If only a moment I summoned,
'The simple praise sweetly,
But sweetlier the sage' — & did rashly
Man's vision unrein,

"I rue it! ..... His guileless forerunners,
Whose brains I could blandish,
To measure the deeps of my mysteries
Applied them in vain.

"From them my waste aimings of futile
I subtly could cover;

'Every best thing', said they, 'to best purpose
Her powers preordain.'

"No more such!..... My species are dwindling,
My forests grow barren,
My popinjays fail from their tappings,
My larks from their strain.

"My leopardine beauties are rarer,
My tusky ones vanish,
My children have aped mine own slaughters
To quicken my wane.

"Let me grow, then, but mildews & mandrakes,
And slimy distortions,
Let nevermore things good & lovely
To me appertain!;

"For Reason is rank in my temples,
And Vision unruly,
And chivalrous land of my cunning
Is heard not again!"

Poelsnn

"I said to Love"

I said to Love,
"It is not now as in old days
When men adored thee & thy ways
All else above;
Named thee the ~~Blest~~ Boy, the Bright, the One
Who spread a Heaven beneath the sun;"
I said to Love.

I said to him,
"We now know more of thee than then;
We were but weak in judgment when,
With hearts ablaze,
We clamoured thee that thou would'st please
Inflict on us thine agonies";
I said to him.

I said to Love,
"Thou art not young, thou art not fair,

No faery darts,
~~Have dart no flame~~, no cherub air,
Nor swan, nor dove,
Are thine;
But features ~~wrap't~~ ~~cruel~~ piti less,
And ~~hidden~~ iron daggers of distress."
I said to Love.

"Depart then, Love!.....
Man's race shall end, dost threaten thou?
The age to come the man of now
Know nothing of? —
We fear not such a threat from thee;
We are too old in apathy!
Mankind shall cease. — So let it be."
I said to Love.

A Commonplace Day

The day is turning ghost.
And scuttles from the kalendar in fits & furtively,
To join the anonymous host
Of those that throng oblivion; ceding this place, maybe,
To one of like degree.

I part the fire-gnawed logs,
Rake forth the embers, spoil the busy flames, & lay the ends
Upon the shining dogs;
Further & further from the nooks the twilight's stride extends,
And beamless black impends.

Nothing of tiniest worth
praise,
Have I wrought, pondered, planned; no one thing asking blame or
Since the pale corpse-like birth
Of this diurnal unit, bearing blanks in all its rays—
Dullest dull-hued
~~Flattest~~ of ~~flat-pitched~~ days.

Wanly upon the ~~window~~-panes
(& yet
The ~~How~~ rain glides as have slid since morn my colourless thoughts;)
Here, while Day's presence wanes,
is slowly ed
And over him ~~The~~ the sepulchre-lid ~~Legend~~ lowers & sets;
He wakens my
~~Something extinct~~ regret.

Regret — though nothing dear
~~Though nought to this emotion~~
That I wot of, was toward in the wide world at his prime,
Or bloomed elsewhere than here,
~~For fleece or garth or deame~~
To die with his decease, & leave a
~~Has lapsed with him, to wake his~~ memory sweet, ~~sad,~~ or sublime,
Or mark him out in Time .....

—

—Yet, maybe, in some soul,
In some spot undiscerned on sea or land, some impulse rose,
Or some intent upstole
Of that enkindling ardency ~~in its fuel luminescence~~ from ~~those~~ manner flows
The world's amendment flows;

—

But which, benumbed at birth
By momentary chance or wile, has missed its hope to be
Embodied on the earth;
And undervisings of this loss to mans futurity
May wake regret in me.

Spelt wrd

At a Lunar Eclipse.

Thy shadow, Earth, from Pole to Central Sea,
Now steals along upon the Moon's meek shine
In even monochrome & ~~arches~~ curving line
Of imperturbable serenity.

How shall I link such sun-cast symmetry
With the torn troubled form I know as thine,
That profile, placid as a brow divine,
With continents of moil & misery?

And can immense Mortality but throw
So small a shade, & Heaven's high human scheme
Be ~~girded by the coasts you hemmed in what that proves~~ hemmed within the last coasts you are implies?

Is such the stellar gauge of earthly show,
Nation at war with nation, ~~Thoughts~~ Brains that teem,
Heroes, & women fairer than the skies?

The Lacking Sense

Scene.- A sad colored landscape, Waddon Vale.

I.

"O Time, whence comes the Mother's moody look amid her labours,
As of one who all unwittingly has wounded where she loves?
Why weaves she not her world-web to according lutes & tabors,
With nevermore this woe remorseful air upon her face,
As of angel fallen from grace?"—

II.

"Her work is but her story: construe not its symbols keenly:
In her wonderworks most truly has she wounded where she loves.
The sense of ills misdealt for ~~weals~~ blisses blanks ~~acclaspings good ends spoilt~~ the mien most queenly,
Self-smitings kill self-joys; & everywhere beneath the sun
Such deeds her hands have done."

III.

"And how explains the Ancient ~~Maeless~~ Mind her crimes upon her creatures,
These fallings from her fair beginnings, woundings where she loves,
~~Against~~ ~~Into~~ her would-be perfect motions, modes, effects, & features
~~Involuting~~ ~~Destalling~~ Admitting cramps, black tumours, wan decay, & baleful blights,
Distress ~~into~~ delights?"

iv.

"Ah – know'st thou not her secret yet, her vainly veiled deficience,
Whence it comes that all unwittingly she wounds the lives she loves?
That sightless are those orbs of hers? – which bar to her omniscience
Brings those fearful unfulfilments, that red ravage through her zones
Whereat all creation groans.

V.

"She whispers it in each pathetic strenuous slow endeavour,
When in mothering she unwittingly sets wounds on what she loves;
Yet her primal doom pursues her, ~~fragrant~~ faultful, fatal is she ever;
Though so deft & nigh to vision is her facile finger-touch
That the seers marvel much!

Vi.

"~~Accord~~ Deal, then her groping skill no scorn, no note of malediction;
Not long on thee will ~~lean~~ press the hand that hurts the lives it loves;
And while she dares deadreckoning on, in darkness of affection,
Assist her where thy creaturely dependence gives thee room,
For thou art of her womb."

To Life

O Life with the sad seared face,
I weary of seeing thee,
And thy draggled cloak, & thy hobbling pace,
And thy too-forced pleasantry!

I know what thou would'st tell
Of Death, Time, Destiny —
I have known it long, & know, too, well
What it all means for me.

But canst thou not array
Thyself in rare disguise,
And feign like truth, for one mad day,
That Earth is Paradise?

I'll tune me to the mood,
And mumm with thee till eve;
And maybe what as interlude
I feign, I shall believe!

Dyptic

Doom & She -

i

There dwells a mighty pair —
Slow, statuesque, ~~immense~~ intense —
Amid the vague Immense:
None can their chronicle declare,
Nor why they be, nor whence.

ii

Mother of all things made
Matchless in artistry,
Unlit with sight is she. —
And though her ever well-obeyed
Vacant of feeling be.

iii

The Matron mildly asks —
A throb in every word —
"Our claymade creatures, lord,
How fare they in their mortal tasks
Upon Earth's bounded bord?

iv

"The fate of those I ~~bore~~ bear,
Dear lord, pray turn a view,
And notify me true:
Shapings that eyelessly I dare
Maybe I would undo.

"Some-

V

"Sometimes from lairs of life
Methinks I catch a groan
Or multitudinous moan,
As though I had schemed a world of strife
Working by touch alone."

VI

"World-weaver" he replies,
I scan all my domain;
But since nor joy nor pain
Doth my clear substance recognize
I read my realms in vain.

VII

"World-weaver, what is Grief?—
And what are Right, & Wrong?
And Feeling, that belong
To creatures all who owe thee fief?—
What worse is Weak than Strong?"....—

VIII

Unlightened, curious, meek,
She broods in sad surmise...
— Some say they have heard her sighs
On ~~Pilsdon Pen~~ Lewesdon or ~~Lewesdon~~ Pilsdon Peak
~~High-stone-Hill~~ Alpine height Polar
When the night tempests rise!

The Problem.

Shall we conceal the ~~truth~~ Case, or tell it —
We who ~~harness~~ believe the evidence? —
Here & there the watch-towers knell it
With a sullen significance,
Heard of the few who hearken intently & carry an eagerly
upstrained sense.

Hearts that are happiest hold not by it;
Better we let, then, the old view reign;
Since there is peace in it, why decry it?
Since there is comfort, why disdain?
Note not the pigment the while ~~once~~ that the painting
~~Have the substance but always be seeing~~ determines hu-
manity's joy & pain!

The Subalterns.

i.

"Poor wanderer," said the leaden sky,
"I fain would lighten thee.
But there be laws in force on high
Which say it must not be."

ii.

"I would not freeze thee, shorn one," cries
The North, "knew I but how
To warm my breath, to slack my stride;
But I am ruled as thou."

iii

"To-morrow I attack thee, wight,"
Said Sickness. "Yet I swear
I bear thy little ark no spite,
But am bid enter there."

iv.

"Come hither, Son," I heard Death say;
"I did not will a grave
Should end thy pilgrimage to-day,
But I, too, am a slave."

v.

We smiled upon each other then,
And life to me more less
That ~~dream~~ fell contour it wore ere when
They owned their passiveness.

Stewart

The Sleep-worker.

When wilt thou wake, O Mother, wake & see —
(As one who, held in trance, has labored long
By automatic prepossession strong) —
The coils that thou hast wrought unwittingly;

Wherein ~~contract~~ have place, unrealized by thee,
Fair growths, foul cankers, right enmeshed with wrong,
Strange ~~symphonies~~ orchestras of victim-shriek & song,
And curious blends of ache & ecstasy? —

Should that morn come, & show thy opened eyes
All ~~the~~ that Life's ~~tenets~~ palpitating tissues feel,
How wilt thou bear thyself in thy surprize? —

Wilt thou destroy, in one wild shock of shame,
Thy whole high heaving firmamental frame,
Or patiently adjust, amend, & heal?

Stewart

9th/21

The Bullfinches.

Brother Bullfys, let us sing
From the dawn till evening!—
For we know not- that we go not-
When ~~we are~~ the days pale pinions ~~white wings~~ fold
~~where they be~~ unto those who sang of old!

When I flew to Blackmoor Vale,
Whence the green-gowned faeries hail,
~~Roosting~~ Fruiting near them I could hear them
Speak of Mother Nature's ways,
Means, & moods,— well-known to fays.

All the creatures ~~near~~ nigh & far,
(Said they there) the Mother's are;
Yet she never ~~makes~~ shows endearment
To protect from warrings wild
Bird or beast- she calls her child.

Busy in her handsome house
Known as Space, she ~~falls~~ ~~fell~~ a-drowse;

Yet

Yet, f in seeming, works on dreaming.
While beneath her groping hands
Fiends make havoc in her bands.

How her hussif'ry succeeds
She unknows or she unheeds,
All things making for Death's taking!....
So the green-gowned faeries say
Living over Blackmoor way.

Come then, ~~fellows~~ Brethren, let us sing
From the dawn till evening!—
For we know not what we go not—
When the days ~~have wings to fold~~ pale pinions fold
~~Have the~~ Unto those who sang of old.

God-forgotten.

I towered far, & lo, I stood within
The presence of the Lord most High,
Sent thither by the sons of earth, to win
Some answer to their cry.

"The Earth, say'st thou? The human race?
By Me created? Sad its lot?
Nay: I have no remembrance of such place:
Such world I fashioned not."—

"O Lord forgive me when I say
Thou spak'st the word, & mad'st it all."—
"The Earth of men— let me bethink me .... Yea!
I dimly do recall

"Some tiny sphere I framed long back,
(Mid millions of such shapes of mine)
So named .... It perished, surely — not a wrack
Remaining, or a sign?

"It

"It lost my interest from the first,
My aims thereafter succeeding ill;
Haply it died of doing as it durst?"—
"Lord, it existeth still."—

"Dark, then, its life! For not a cry
Of aught it bears do I now hear;
Of its own act the threads were snapt whereby
Its plaints had reached mine ear.

"It used to ask for gifts of good,
Till came its severance self-entailed,
When sudden silence on that side ensued,
And has till now prevailed.

"All other orbs have kept in touch;
Their voicings reach me speedily:
Thy people took upon them overmuch
In sundering them from me!

"And

Paterson

"And it is strange – though sad enough –
Earth's race should think that one whose call
Frames, daily, shining spheres of flawless stuff
Must heed their tainted ball!....

"But say'st thou 'tis by pangs distraught,
And strife, & silent suffering?–
Deep grieved am I that injury should be wrought
Even on so ~~mean~~ poor a thing!

"Thou should'st have learnt that Not to Mend
For me could mean but Not to Know:
Hence, Messengers! and straightway ~~make~~ put an end
To what men undergo!"....

Homing at dawn, I thought to see
One of the Messengers standing by.
Oh, childish hope!..... Yet oft it comes to me
When trouble ~~hovers~~ hovers nigh.

The Bedridden Peasant
~~A Peasant's Prologue~~ to an Unknowing God.

Much wonder I — here long low-laid —
That this dead wall should be
Betwixt the Maker & the made,
Between Thyself & me!

—

For, say one puts a child to nurse,
He eyes it now & then
To know if better 'tis, or worse,
And if it mourn, & when.

—

But Thou, Lord, giv'st us men our day
In sleepless bondage thus
To Time & Chance, & seem'st straightway
To think no more of us.

—

That some disaster ~~made~~ cleft Thy scheme,
And tore us wide apart,
So that no cry can cross, I deem;
For Thou art ~~broad~~ mild of heart.

And

And would'st not shape & shut us in
Where voice can not be heard:
'Tis plain Thou meant'st that we should win
Thy succour by a word.

——

Might but Thy ✝ sense flash down the skies
Like man's from clime to clime,
Thou would'st not let ~~me~~ my agonize
Through ~~my~~ my remaining time;

——

But, seeing how much Thy creatures bear —
Lame, ~~maim~~ starved, or maimed, or blind —
Thou'dst heal the ills with quickest care
Of me & all my kind.

——

~~Then, since Thou mak'st not these things be~~
~~Sure, then, that Thou dost not make be~~
But these things dost not Know,
~~These things, but such unknown,~~
I'll praise Thee as were shown to me
Thy mercies Thou would'st show!

By the Earth's Corpse.

i.

"O Lord, why grievest thou?—
Since Life has ceased to be
Upon this globe, now cold
As lunar land & sea,
And humankind & fowl & fur
Are gone eternally,
All is the same to Thee as ere
They knew mortality."

ii.

"O Time", replies the Lord,
"Thou read'st me ill, I ween;
Were all the same, I should not grieve
At that late earthly scene,
Now blestly past — though planned by me
With interest close & keen!—
Nay, nay: things now are not the same
As ~~ere the world had~~ they have earlier been.

iii

" Written indelibly
On my eternal mind
Are all the ~~wrongs~~ wrongs endured
By Earth's poor patient kind,
Which my too oft unconscious hand
Let enter undesigned.
No god can cancel deeds foredone,
Or thy old coils unwound!

iv.

" As when, in Noë's days,
I whelmed the ~~world~~ plains with sea,
So at this last, when flesh
And herb but fossils be,
And, all extinct, their piteous dust
Revolves obliviously,
That I made Earth, & life, & man,
It still repenteth me! "

Mute Opinion.

i.

I traversed a dominion
Whose ~~peoples spoke~~ spokesmen spake out strong
~~Their~~ Its purpose & opinion
Through pulpit, ~~press~~ press, & song.
I scarce had means to note there
A large-eyed few, & dumb,
Who thought not as those thought there
That stirred the heat & hum.

ii

When, grown a Shade, beholding
That land in lifetime trode,
To learn if its unfolding
Fulfilled its clamored code,
I saw, in each unbroken,
Its history outwrought
Not as the loud has spoken,
But as the dumb had thought.

To an Unborn Pauper Child.

[small Eyre] "She must go to the Union house to have her baby": Petty Sessions.

i.

Breathe not, hid Heart: cease silently,
And though Thy birth-hour beckons thee
Sleep the long sleep:
The Doomsters heap
Travails & teens around us here,
And Time-wraiths turn ~~festively~~ to fear.

ii.

Hark, how the peoples surge & sigh,
And laughters fail, & greetings die;
Hopes dwindle; yea
Faiths waste away,
Affections & enthusiasms numb;
Thou canst not mend these things if thou dost come.

iii

Had I the ear of wombed ~~souls~~ souls
Ere their terrestrial chart unrolls,
And thou wert free
To cease, or be,
Then would I tell thee all I know,
And put it to thee: Will thou take Life so?

iv.

IV.

Vain vow! No hint of mine may thence
To theewards fly: to thy locked sense
Explain none can
Life's dismal plan:
Thou wilt thy ignorant entry make
Though skies spout fire & blood & nations quake.

V.

Fain would I, dear, find some shut plot
Of earth's wide weald for thee, where not
One tear, one qualm,
Should break the calm.
But I am weak as thou and bare;
No man can ~~make~~ change the ~~steady fords~~ common lot to ~~spare~~ rare!

VI.

Must come & bide. And such are we —
Unreasoning, ~~fathomless~~ sanguine, visionary —
That I can hope
Health, love, friends, scope
In full for thee; can dream thou'lt find
Joys ~~never~~ ..... yet attained by humankind!

To Flowers from Italy in winter.

Sunned in the South, & here to-day;
– If all organic things
Be sentient, Flowers, as some men say,
What are your ponderings?

How can you stay, nor vanish quite
From this bleak spot of thorn,
And birch, & fir, & frozen white
Expanse of the forlorn?

Frail ~~Poor~~ luckless exiles hither brought!
Your dust will not regain
~~Where you shall not & rust,~~
Old sunny haunts of Classic thought
When you shall waste & wane;
~~With rocks hold your dust,~~

But mix with alien earth, be ~~alien to precincts~~, lit
With frigid Boreal flame,
And not a sign remain in it
To tell men whence you came!

Thom

70

On a Fine Morning.

i.

Whence comes Solace? – not from seeing
What is doing, suffering, being,
Not from noting Life's conditions,
Nor from heeding Time's monitions;
But in clearing of the Dream,
And in gazing at the gleam
Whereby gray things golden seem.

ii.

Thus do I this heyday, holding
Shadows but as lights unfolding,
As no specious show this moment
With its ~~oddesses~~ irises embowment;
But as nothing other than
Part of a benignant plan;
Proof that earth was made for man.

February - 1899.

To Lizbie Browne

i.

Dear Lizbie Browne,
Where are you now?
In sun, in rain? —
Or is your brow
Past joy, past pain,
Dear Lizbie Browne?

ii.

Sweet Lizbie Browne
How you could smile,
How you could sing! —
How ~~you could~~ archly wile
In glance-giving,
Sweet Lizbie Browne!

iii.

And, Lizbie Browne,
Who else had hair
Bay-red like yours,
Or flesh so fair
Bred out of doors,
Sweet Lizbie Browne?

iv.

When, Lizbie Browne,
You had just begun
To be endeared
By stealth to one,
You disappeared,
My Lizbie Browne!

v.

Ay, Lizbie Browne,
So swift your life,
And mine so slow,
You were a wife
Ere I could show
Love, Lizbie Browne.

vi.

Still, Lizbie Browne,
You won, they said,
The best of men
When you were wed....
Where went you then,
O Lizbie Browne?

vii.

Dear Lizbie Browne,
I should have thought,
"Girls ripen fast,"
And coaxed & caught
You ere you passed,
Dear Lizbie Browne!

viii

But, Lizbie Browne,
I let you slips;
Shaped not a sign;
Touched never your lips
With lips of mine,
Lost Lizbie Browne!

ix.

So, Lizbie Browne,
When ~~I~~ on a day
Men speak of me
As not, you'll say,
"And who was he?" —
Yes, Lizbie Browne!

Song of ~~Young~~ Hope.

~~(Song.)~~

O sweet To-morrow! —
After To-day
There will away
This sense of sorrow.
Then let us borrow
Hope, for a gleaming
Soon will be streaming,
Dimmed by no
~~Under the~~ gray —
~~The~~ No
gray!

While the winds wing us
Sighs from The Gone,
Nearer w dawn
Minute-beats bring us;
When there will sing us
Larks of a story
Waiting our story
Further anon —
Anon!

Doff the black token,
Don the red shoon,
Right & retune
Viol-strings broken;
Null the words spoken
In speeches of rueing,
The night cloud is hueing,
To-morrow shines soon —
Shines soon!

The Well-Beloved.

I wayed by star & planet shine
Towards the Dear one's home
At Kingsbere, there to make her mine
When the next sun upclomb.

—

I edged the ancient hill & wood
Beside the Ikling Way,
Nigh where the Pagan temple stood
In the world's earlier day.

—

And as I quick & quicker walked
On gravel & on green,
I sang to sky, & tree, & talked
Of her I called my queen.

—

—"O faultless is her dainty form,
And luminous her mind;
She is the God-created norm
Of perfect womankind!"

A

A shape whereon one star-~~note~~ blink gleamed
Glode ~~softly~~ smoothly by my side,
A woman's; & her motion seemed
The motion of my bride.

And yet methought she'd drawn erstwhile
Adown the ancient leaze,
Where once ~~stood~~ ..... pile & peristyle
For men's idolatries.

—"O maiden lithe & lone, what may
Thy name & lineage be,
Who so resemblest by this ray
My darling? — Art thou she?" ++

The shape: "Thy ~~Thy mourner~~ bride remains within
Her father's grange & grove". ++
"Thou speakest rightly," I broke in,
"Thou art not she I love". ++

—"Nay: though thy bride remain inside
Her father's walls," said she,
"The one most dear is with thee here,
For thou dost love but me". —

Then

Then I: "But she, my only choice,
Is now at Kingsbere Grove?"
Again her soft mysterious voice:
"I am thy only Love."—

Thus still she vouches, & still I says,
"O sprite, that cannot be!".....
It was as if my bosom blest,
So much she troubled me.

The sprite resumed: "Thou hast transferred
To her dull form awhile
My beauty, fame, & deed, & word,
My gestures & my smile.

"O fatuous man, this truth infer,
Brides are not what they seem;
Thou lovest what thou dreamest her;
I am thy very dream!" ++

"O then," I answered miserably,
Speaking as scarce I knew,
"My loved one, I must wed with thee
If what thou say'st be true!"

She, proudly, thinning in the gloom:
"Though, since troth-plight began,
I've ever stood as bride to groom,
I wed no mortal man."

Thereat she vanished by the Cross
That, entering Kingsbere town,
The two long lanes form, near the fosse
Below the ~~Camp~~ faneless Down.

—When I arrived & met my bride
Her look was pinched & thin,
As if her soul had shrunk & died,
And left a waste within.

Her Reproach.

Con the dead page as 'twere live love; press on!
Cold wisdom's words will ease thy track for thee;
Aye, go; cast off sweet ways, & leave me wan
To ~~howling~~ biting blasts that are intent on me.

But if thy object Fame's far summits be,
Whose inclines many a skeleton o'erlies
That missed both dream & substance, stop, & see
How absence wears these cheeks & dims these eyes!

It surely is far sweeter & more wise
To water love, than toil & leave anon
A name whose glory-gleam will but advise
Invidious minds to quench it with their own,

And over which the kindliest will but say
A moment, musing, "He, too, had his day!"

Westbourne Park Villas,
1867.

The Inconsistent.

I say, "She was as good as fair",
When standing by her mound;
"Such passing sweetness", I declare,
"no longer treads the ground."
I say, "What living Love can catch
Her bloom & bonhomie,
And what in ~~modern~~ newer maidens match
Her olden warmth to me!"

—There stands within yon vestry-nook
Where bonded lovers sign,
Her name upon a faded book
With one that is not mine.
To him she breathed the tender vow
She once had breathed ~~made~~ to me,
But yet, I say, O Love, ~~I whisper~~ even now
Would I had died for thee!"

A Broken Appointment.

You did not come,
And marching Time drew on, & wore me numb.—
Yet less for loss of your dear presence there
Than that I thus found lacking in your make
That high compassion which can overbear
~~Aversness~~ Reluctance for pure lovingkindness' sake
Grieves I, when, as the hope-horn stroked its sum
You did not-come.

You love not me,
And love alone can lend ~~mmmm~~ your loyalty;
—I know & knew it. But, unto the store
Of human deeds divine in all but name,
Was it not worth a little more or more
To add yet this: Once, ~~here~~ you, a woman, came
To soothe a ~~mad-sad~~ time-torn man; even though it be
You love not me?

"Between us now".

Between us now & here –
Two thrown together
Who are not wont to wear
Life's flushest feather –
Who see the scenes slide past,
The daytimes dimming fast,
Let there be truth at last,
Even if despair.

So thoroughly & long
Have you now known me,
So real in faith & strong
Have I now shown me,
That nothing needs disguise
Further in any wise,
Or asks or justifies
A guarded tongue.

Face unto face, then, say,
Eyes mine own meeting,
Is your heart far away,
Or with mine beating?
When false things are brought low,
And swift things have grown slow,
Feigning like frost shall go,
Faith be for aye.

"How Great my Grief."

~~[illegible]~~

("Triolet")

How great my grief, my joys how few
Since first it was my fate to know thee! –
How great my grief, my joys how few
Now memory shaped old times anew,
Now loving kindness helped to show thee
How great my grief, my joys how few
Since first it was my fate to know thee?

"I need not go."

I need not go
Through sleet & snow
To where I know
She waits for me:
She will wait me there
Till I find it fair,
And have time to spare
From company.

When I've overgot
The world somewhat,
When things mean not-
Such stress & strain,
Is soon enough
By cypress sough
To tell my Love
I'm come again.

And if some day
when none cries nay,
I still delay
To seek her side
(Though ample measure
Of fitting leisure
Await my pleasure)
She will not chide.

What - not upbraid me
That I delayed me,
Nor ask what stayed me
So long
~~Enamored~~? Ah, no! F
New cares may claim me,
New loves inflame me,
She will not blame me,
But suffer it so. F

The Coquette, & After.

(Triolets)

i.

For long he cried with I knew
That your free heart should ache for me,
While mine showed fear no ache for you;
For, long — he cried with! — I knew
How men can feel, & craved to view
My triumph — fates not to be
For long! ..... The cried with I knew
That your free heart should ache for me!

ii.

At last one pays the penalty —
The woman — women always do.
My farce, I found, was tragedy
At last! — One pays the penalty
With interest when one, fancy-free,
Learns love, learns shame ..... Of sinners two
At last one pays the penalty —
The woman — women always do!

A Spot.

In years defaced & lost,
Two sat here, transport- tossed,
Lit by a living love
The ~~frigid~~ wilted world knew nothing of:
Scared momently
By gaingivings,
Then hoping things
That could not be.

Of love & us no trace
Abides upon the place;
The sun & shadows wheel,
Season & season sere-ward steal;
Fond days & fair
Here, too, prevail,
And gust & gale
As everywhere.

But (lonely shepherd) souls
Who ~~here~~ here ~~taste~~ task amid these knolls
May catch a faery sound
On ~~warm still~~ noontides ~~[illegible]~~ (sleepy) from the ground:
"O not again
Till Earth outwears
Shall love like theirs
Suffuse this glen!"

Gordon

Long Plighted

Is it worth while, dear, now,
To call for bells, & sally forth arrayed
For marriage-rites — discussed, decried, delayed
So many years?

Is it worth while, dear, now,
To stir ~~regrets~~ desire for ~~food, once = hoped-for things~~ ~~fond~~ fond ~~prosposings~~ prosposings
By feints that Time still serves for dallyings,
~~When~~ Though quittance nears?

Is it worth while, dear, when
The day being so far spent, so low the sun,
The undone thing will soon be as the done,
And smiles as tears?

Is it worth while, dear, when
Our cheeks are worn, our early bloom is gray;
When, meet or part we, none says yea or nay,
Or heeds, or cares?

Is

Is it worth while, dear, since
We still can ~~climb~~ old Yell'ham's ~~clumber~~ wooded mounds
~~Separately~~ Together, as each season ~~greater~~ steals rounds
And disappears?

Is it worth while, dear, since
As mates in Mellstock churchyard we can lie
Till the last crash of all things low & high
Shall end the spheres?

The Widow.

By Mellstock Lodge & Avenue
Towards her door I went,
And sunset on her window-panes
Reflected our intent.

The creeper on the gable nigh
Was fired to more than red,
And when I came to halt thereby,
"Bright as my joy!" I said.

Of late days it had been her aim
To meet me in the hall;
Now at my footsteps no one came,
And no one to my call.

Again I knocked, & tardily
An inner step was heard,
And I was shown her presence then
With scarce an answering word.

She

She met me, & but barely took
My proffered warm embrace;
Preoccupation weighed her look,
And hardened her sweet face.

"To-morrow - could you - would you ~~come~~ call?
.. make brief your present
~~I wonder now can~~ stay?
My child is ill - my one, my all! -
~~My child has sickened & I cannot~~
And can't be left. ~~I~~
~~Can not leave home~~, To-day!"

And then she turns, & gives commands
As I were out of sound,
Or were no more to her & hers
Than any neighbour round....

— As maid I wooed her; But one came
And coaxed her heart away,
And when in time he wedded her
I deemed her gone for aye.

He won, I lost her; & my loss
I bore I knew not how:
But I do think I suffered then
Less wretchedness than now.

For Time, in taking him, had oped
An unexpected door
Of bliss for me, which grew to seem
Far surer than before.....

Her word is steadfast, & I know
That plighted ~~fast~~ firm are we:
But she has ~~found~~ caught ~~fresh~~ love-calls ~~new~~ ~~claimants~~ since
She smiles as maid on me!

Paterson

At a Hasty Wedding

(Triolet)

If hours be years the Twain are blest,
For now they solace swift-desire
By bonds of every bond the best,
If hours be years. The Twain are blest
Do eastern stars slope never west,
Nor pallid ashes follow fire:
If hours be years the Twain are blest,
For now they solace swift desire.

The Dream-follower.

A dream of mine flew over the mead
To the halls where my old Love reigns;
And it drew me on to follow its lead:
And I stood at her window-panes:

And I saw but a thing of flesh & bone
Speeding on to its cleft in the clay;
And my dream was scared, & expired on a moan,
And I whitely hastened away.

His Immortality.

i.

I saw a dead man's finer part
Shining within each faithful heart
Of those bereft. Then said I: "This ~~may must~~ be
His immortality."

ii

I looked there ~~on a late day~~ as the season wore,
And still his soul ~~outshaped, as when in clay~~ continuously upbore
Its life in theirs. But less its shine excelled
Than when I first beheld.

iii

His fellow-yearsmen passed, & then
In later hearts I looked for him again;
And found him — shrunk, alas, into a thin
And spectral mannikin.

iv.

Lastly I ask — now ~~aged~~ old and chill —
If aught of him remain unperished still;
And find, in me alone, a feeble spark,
Dying amid the dark.

Feb. 1899.

The To-be-Forgotten.

~~[illegible]~~

~~[illegible]~~

I

I heard a small sad sound.
And stood awhile amid the tombs around:
"Wherefore, old friends," said I, "are ye distrest
Now, screened from life's unrest?"—

II

—"O not at being here;
But that our future second death is drear,
When, with no living memory of us numbs,
And blank oblivion comes!

III

"Those who our grandsires ~~[illegible]~~ be
Lie here embraced by deeper death than we;
Nor shape nor thought of theirs canst thou descry
With keenest backward eye.

IV

"They bide as quite forgot;
They are as men who have existed not;
Theirs is a loss past loss of fitful breath;
It is the second death.

"We

V.

"We here, as yet, each day
Are blest with dear recall; as yet, always
In some soul holds a loved countenance
Of shape & voice & glance.

VI.

"But what has been will be —
First memory, then oblivion's turbid sea:
Like ~~men foregone~~, we join us unto those
Whose ~~earth-time~~ story no one knows.

VII

"For which of us could hope
To show in life that world-awakening scope
Granted the few whose memory none lets die,
But all men magnify?

VIII

We were but Fortune's sport;
Things true, things lovely, things of good report-
We neither shunned nor sought..... We see on bourne,
And seeing it we mourn."

~~Feb. 9. 1895.?~~

Wives in the Sere.

i

Never a careworn wife but shows,
If a joy suffuse her,
Something beautiful to those
Patient to peruse her,
Some one charm he loved unknown,
Precious to a miser,
Haply what, ere years were foes,
Moved her mate to choose her.

ii

But, be it a hint of rose
That an instant hues her,
Or some early light or pose
Wherewith thought renews her —
Seen by him at full, ere woes
Practised to abuse her —
Sparely comes it, surely goes,
Time again subdues her.

The Superseded.

i

As newer comers crowd the fore
We drop behind.....
We who have laboured long & sore
Times out of mind,
And keen are yet: must not regret
To drops behind.

ii

Yet there are of us some who grieve
To go behind;
Staunch, strenuous souls who scarce believe
Their fries decline,
And know none cares, remembers, spares
Who go behind.

iii

'Tis not that we have unforetold
We drop behind;
We feel the new must oust the old
In every kind,
But yet we think, must we, must we,
Too, drop behind?

An August Midnight.

i.

A shaded lamp, & a waving blind,
And the beat of a clock from a distant floor:
On this scene enter — winged, horned, & spined —
A longlegs, a moth, & a dumbledore;
While mid my page there idly stands
A sleepy fly, that rubs its hands .....

ii.

Thus meet we five, in this still place,
At this point of time, at this point in space.
My guests parade my new-penned ink,
Or bang at the lamp-glass, whirl, & sink.
"God's humblest, they!" I muse. — Yet why?
They know ~~earth~~ life-secrets that I know not.

Max Gate, 1899.

The Caged Thrush freed & home again.

(Villanelle.)

"Men know but little more than we,
Who count us least of things Terrene,
How happy days are made to be!

"Of such strange tidings what think ye
O birds in brown ~~who~~ that peck and preen?
Men know but little more than we!

"When I was borne from yonder tree
In bonds to them, I hoped to glean
How happy days are made to be.

"And want & wailing turned to glee;
Alas! despite their mighty mien
Men know but little more than we!

"They cannot change the Frost's decree,
They cannot keep the skies serene;
How happy days are made to be

"Eludes great Man's sagacity
No less than ours, O tribes in treen!
Men know but little more than we
How happy days are made to be.

Birds at Winter Nightfall.

(Triolet)

Around the house the flakes fly faster.
And all the berries now are gone
From holly & cotoneaster
Around the house. The flakes fly! — faster
Shutting indoors that crumb-outcaster
We used to see upon the lawn
Around the house. The flakes fly faster,
And all the berries now are gone!

Max Gate.

The Puzzled Game-birds

(Triolet.)

They are not those who used to feed us
When we were young — they cannot be —
These shapes that now bereave & bleed us?
They are not those who used to feed us,—
For ~~And~~ would they ~~not at least~~ fair terms concede us? —
—If hearts can house such treachery
They are not those who used to feed us
When we were young — they cannot be!

Winter in Durnover Field.

Scene.— A wide stretch of fallow ground recently sown with wheat, & frozen to iron hardness. Three large birds walking about thereon, & wistfully eyeing the surface. Wind keen from north-east: sky a dull grey.

(Triolet.)

Rook.— Throughout the field I find no grain;
The cruel frost encrusts the cornland!

Starling.— Aye: patient pecking now is vain
Throughout the field, I find....

Rook.— No grain!

Pigeon.— Nor will be comrade, till it rain,
Or genial thawings loose the torn land
Throughout the field.

Rook.— I find no grain:
The cruel frost encrusts the cornland!

The last Chrysanthemum

Why should this flower delay so long
To show its tremulous plumes?
— Now is the time of plaintive robin-song,
When flowers are in their tombs.

Through the ~~long~~ slow summer, when the sun
Called to each frond & whorl
— That all he could for flowers was being done,
Why did it not unfurl?

It must have felt that fervid call
Although it took no heed,
— Waking but now, when leaves like corpses fall,
And says all retrocede.

Too late its beauty, lonely thing.
The season's shine is spent.
Nothing remains for it but shivering
In tempests turbulent.

Hard

Had it a reason for delay,
Dreaming in witlessness
That for a bloom so delicately gay
Winter would stay its stress?.....

I talk as if the thing were born
With sense to work its mind,
Yet ~~when it is~~ but one mask of many worn
By the Great Face behind.

The Darkling Thrush.

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was spectre-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate
The weakening eye of day.
The tangled bine-stems scored the sky
Like strings from broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires.

The

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ & birth
Was shrunken hard & dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I.

At once a voice outburst among
The bleak twigs overhead
In a full-throated evensong
Of joy illimited;
An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, & small,
In blast-beruffled plume,
Had chosen thus to fling his soul
Upon the growing gloom.

So little cause for carolings
Of such ecstatic sound
Was written on terrestrial things
Afar or nigh around,
That I could think there trembled through
His happy goodnight air
Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
And I was unaware.

The Century's End, ~~1899~~. 1900.

The Comet at Yalbury, or Yell'ham.

i

It bends far over Yell'ham Plain,
And we, from Yell'ham Height,
Stand and regard its fiery train,
So soon to swim from sight.

ii

It will return long years hence, when
As now its strange swift shine
Will fall on Yell'ham, but not then
On that sweet ~~face~~ form of mine.

Mad Judy.

When the hamlet-hailed a birth
Judy used to cry:
When she heard our christening-mirth
She would kneel & sigh.
She was cracked, we knew, & we
Humoured her ~~fantasy~~ aberrancy.

—

When the daughters & the sons
Gathered them to wed,
And we like-intending ones
Danced till dawn was red,
She would rock & mutter, "More
Comers to this ~~soulless~~ stony shore!"

—

When old Headsman Death laid hands
On a ~~neighbour~~ babe or twain,
She would feast, & by her brands
Sing her songs again.
What she liked we let her do,
Judy was insane, we knew.

A Wasted Illness.

Through vaults of pain,
Enribbed & wrought with groins of ghastliness,
I passed, & garish spectres moved my brain
To dire distress.

—

And hammerings,
And quakes, & shoots, & stifling hotness, blent
With webby waxing things & waning things
As on I went.

—

"Where lies the end
To this foul way?" I asked with weakening breath.
Thereon ahead ~~I saw~~ a door extend —
The door to Death.

—

It loomed more clear:
"At last!" I cried. "The all-delivering Door!"
And then, I knew not how, it grew less near
Than theretofore.

—

and

And back slid I
Along the galleries by which I came,
And tediously the day returned, & sky,
And life — the same.

—

And all was well:
Old circumstance resumed its former show,
And on my head the dews of ~~kindness~~ comfort fell
As ere my woe.

—

I roam anew,
Scarce conscious of my late distress... And yet
Those backward steps through pain I cannot view
Without regret.

—

For that dire train
Of waxing shapes & waning, passed before,
And those grim aisles, must be traversed again
To reach that door.

—

A Man. (In memory of H. of M.)

I

In Casterbridge there stood a noble pile,
Wrought with pilaster, bay, & balustrade,
In tactful times when shrewd Eliza swayed.—
On burgher, squire, & clown
It smiled the long street down for near a mile.

ii

But evil days beset that domicile,
The stately beauties of its roof & wall
Passed into sordid hands. Condemned to fall
Were cornice, quoin, & cove,
And all that art had wove in antique style.

iii

Among the hired dismantlers entered there
One till the moment of his task untold:
Being charged therewith he gazed, & answered bold:
"Be needy I or no,
I will not help lay low a house so fair!

iv.

"Hunger is hard. But since the terms be such—
No wage, or labour stained with the disgrace
Of wrecking what our age cannot replace
To save its tasteless soul—
I'll do without your dole. Life is not much!"

V.

V.

Dismissed with sneers he backed his tools & went,
And wandered workless; for it seemed unwise
To close with one who dared to criticize
And carp on points of taste:
To work where they were placed rude men were meant.

VI.

Years ~~passed~~ wore. He aged, sank, sickened, & was not:
And it was said, "A man intractable
And ~~grim~~ curst is gone." None sighed to hear his knell,
None sought his churchyard-place;
His name, his rugged face, were soon forgot.

VII.

The stones of that fair hall lie far & wide,
And but a few recall its ancient mould;
Yet when I pass the spot I long to hold
As truth what fancy saith:
"His protest lives where deathless things abide!"

The Dame of Athelhall.

i.

"Soul! Shall I see thy face," she said,
"In one brief hour?
And away with thee from a loveless bower
To a far-off sun, to a vine-~~laced~~ wapt bower,
And be thine own unseparater,
And challenge the world's white glower?"

ii.

She quickened ~~to~~ her feet, & met him where
They had predesigned:
And they clasped, & mounted, & cleft the air
Upon whirling wheels; till he will to bind
Her life with his made the moments there
Efface the years behind.

iii

~~slid.~~ and the sight of
Miles ~~upon mile, [illegible]~~ the port up-grew
As they sped on:
When slipping its ~~spring~~ bond the bracelet flew
From her fondled arm. Replaced anon,
Its cameo of the abjured one drew
Her musings thereupon.

iv.

The gaud with ~~its portrait~~ (his image) once had been
A gift from him:
And so it was that its carving keen
~~Awakened~~ Refurbished memories wearing dim,

~~Their~~ Which

~~That~~ Which set in
~~Dark~~ ~~that~~ (her soul ~~with~~ a ~~Tear~~ throe of teen,
And a tear on her lashes' brim.

V.

"I may not go!" she at length upspake,
"Thoughts call me back —
I would still lose all for your dear dear sake;
My heart is thine, friend! But my track
~~I thought I was forward bound~~ I home to Athelhall must take
To hinder household wrack!"

VI.

He appealed. But they parted, weak & wan;
And he left
~~Then~~ the shore;
His ship diminished, was low, was gone;
And she heard in the waves as the daylight wore,
And read ~~hear~~ in the cheer of the sun that shone,
That they parted for evermore.

VII.

She homed ~~returned~~ as she came; ~~At~~ at the ~~fall~~ dip of eve
On Athelhall Coomb
Regaining Hall
~~She regained~~ the ~~walls~~ she had sworn to leave.....
The house was soundless as a tomb,
And she enters her chamber, there to grieve
Lone, kneeling, in the gloom.

VIII

VIII.

From the lawn without rose her husband's voice
To one his friend:
"Another her Love, another my choice,
Her going is good. Our conditions mend;
In a change of mates we shall both rejoice;
I hoped that it thus might end!

IX.

"A quick divorce; she will make him hers,
And I wed mine.
So Time rights all things in long long years —
Or rather she, by her bold design!
I admire a woman no balkdeters:
She has blessed my life, in fine.

X.

"I shall build new rooms for my new true bride,
Let the bygone be:
By now, no doubt, she has crossed the tide
With the man to her mind. Far happier she
In some warm vineland by his side
Than ever she was with me."

Gullard

The Seasons of her Year.

i.

Winter is white on turf & tree,
And birds are flee;
But summer songsters pipe to me,
And petals spread,
For what I dreamt of secretly
His lips have said!

ii.

O 'tis a fine May morn, they say,
And blooms have blown;
But ~~cold~~ wild & wintry is my day,
My birds make moan;
For he who vowed leaves me to pay
Alone — alone!

The Milkmaid.

Under a daisied bank
There stands a rich red ruminating cow,
And hard against her flank
A cotton-hooded milkmaid bends her brow.

The flowery river-ooze
Upheaves & falls: the milk purrs in the pail;
Few pilgrims but would choose
The peace of such a life in such a vale.

He must breathes words — to vent,
It seems, her sense of nature's scenery,
Of whose life, sentiment,
And essence, very part itself is she.

She bends a glance of pain,
And, at a moment's, lets escape a tear:
Is it
~~Is it~~ that passing train,*
Whose alien ~~is~~ whirr
~~Is repulsive~~ offends her country ear?—

Nay! Phyllis does not dwell
On neighbouring & familiar things like these;
What moves her is the spell
Of other themes & other poetries:

'Could she ~~by~~ next Sunday morn
~~Get her new frock~~ Sport silk attire, no meads might dry to dun,
Trains shriek till ears were torn,
If Fred would not prefer that Other One.

The Levelled Churchyard.

~~(W——r Minster.)~~

"O Passenger, pray list & eatch
Our sighs & piteous groans,
Half stifled in this jumbled patch
Of ~~stretched~~ wretched memorial stones!

"We late-lamented, resting here,
Are mixed to human jam,
And each to each ejaculams in fear,
'I know not which I am!'

"The wickedest people have annexed
The verses on the good;
A roaring drunkard sports the text
Teetotal Tommy stoned!

"Where we ~~were buried~~ are huddled none can trace,
And if our names remain
They pave some path or ~~street~~ p——ing place
Where we have never lain!

"There's not a modest maiden elf
But dreads the final Trumpet,
Lest half of her should rise herself,
And ~~all the rest a~~ half some local strumpet!

"From restorations of Thy fane,
From Smoothings of Thy sward,
From zealous Churchmen's pick & plane,
Deliver us O Lord! Amen."

About 1882.

The Ruined Maid.

"O, 'Melia, my dear, this does everything crown! —
Who could have supposed I should meet you in Town!
And whence such fair garments, such prosperi-ty?" —
"O, didn't you know I'd been ruined?" said she.

— You
"You left us in tatters, without shoes or socks,
Tired of
Digging potatoes, & spudding up docks;
And now you're gay bracelets & bright feathers three!" —
"Yes: that's how we dress when we're ruined," said she.

— "At home in the barton you said 'thee' & 'thou',
And 'thik oon', & 'theäs oon', & 't'other'; but now
You talking quite fits 'ee for high compa-ny!" —
"Some polish is gained with one's ruin", said she.

— "Your hands were like paws then, your face blue & bleak,
But now I'm bewitched by your delicate cheek,
And your little gloves fit as on any la-dy!" —
"We never do work when we're ruined," said she.

"You

"You used to call home-life a hag-ridden dream,
And you'd sigh, & you'd sock; but at present you seem
To know not of megrims or melancho-ly!"—
"True. ~~There's some truth in~~ ~~that~~ ~~advantage~~ ~~in~~ ruin," said she.
~~That is one~~ There's an

"I wish I had feathers, a fine sweeping gown,
And a delicate face, & could strut about Town!"—
"Ah-~~no~~ no!— A raw country girl, such as you be,
Isn't equal to ~~such~~ that. You ain't ruined," said she.

Westbourne Park Villas,
~~1867~~ 1866.

The Respectable Burgher
on "the Higher Criticism".

Since Reverend Doctors now declare
That clerks & people must prepare
To doubt if Adam ever were;
~~And~~ To hold the Flood a local scare;
To argue, though the stolid stare,
That everything had happened ere
The prophets wrote happening unaware;
That David was no Giant-slayer,
Nor one to call a God-obeyer
In certain details ~~we could~~ we could spare,
But rather was a debonair
Shrewd bandit, skilled as banjo-player:
That Solomon sang the fleshly Fair,
And gave the Church no thought whate'er;
That Esther with her royal wear,
And Mordecai the son of Jair,
And Joshua's triumphs, Job's despair,
And Balaam's ass's bitter blare;
Nebuchadnezzar's furnace-flare,
And Daniel & the den affair,

And

And other stories rich & rare,
Were writ to make old doctrine wear
Something of a romantic air:
That the Nain widow's only heir,
And Lazarus with cadaverous ~~stare~~ glare
(As done in oils by Piombo's care)
Did not return from Sheol's lair:
That Jael ~~baited~~ set a fiendish snare,
That Pontius Pilate acted square,
That never a sword cut Malchus's ear;
And – (but ~~Lucretia~~ for shame I must forbear)
That — — did not reappear!....
[white line]
Since thus they ~~bid~~ hint, not turn a hair,
All churchgoing will I forswear,
And sit on Sundays in my chair,
And read that moderate man Voltaire.

Architectural Masks

i

There is a house with inner walls
And mullioned windows worn & old:
And its long dwellers in those halls
Have souls that know but sordid calls,
And daily ~~dream~~ dote on gold.

ii

In blazing brick & plaster show
Not far away a "villa" gleams,
And here a family few may know
With book & pencil, viol & bow,
Lead inner lives of dreams.

iii.

The philosophic passers say,
"See that old mansion mossed & fair:
Poetic souls therein are they:
And O that sandy box! Away
Ye vulgar people there."

The Tenant-for-Life

The sun said, watching my watering-pot:
"Some morn you'll pass away;
These flowers & plants I parch up hot—
Who'll water them that day?

"Those banks & beds whose shape your eye
Has planned in line so true,
New hands will change, unreasoning why
Such shape seemed best to you.

"Within your house will strangers sit,
And wonder how first it came;
They'll talk of their schemes for improving it,
And will not mention your name.

"They'll care not how, or when, or at what
You sighed, laughed, suffered here,
Though you feel more in an hour of the spot
Than they will feel in a year.

"As I look on at you here, now,
Shall I look on at these;
But as to our old times, avow
From no knowledge — hold my peace!...

"O friend, it matters not, I say;
Bethink ye, I have shined
On nobler ones than you, & they
Are dead men out of mind."

The King's Experiment.

~~During~~ ~~It was~~ a wet wan hour in spring,
~~And Nature he Mother~~ And Nature met King Doom ~~by Longpaste~~ beside a Lane,
Wherein Hodge trudged, all blithely ballading
~~By Nature's~~ The Mother's smiling reign.

"Why warbles he that skies are fair,
And coombs alight", she cries, "and fallows gay,
When I have placed no sunshine in the air
Or glow on earth to-day?"

"'Tis in the comedy of things
That such should be," returned the one of Doom,
"Charge now the scene with brightest blazonings,
And he shall call them gloom".

She gave the word: the sun outbroke,
All ~~Blackmoor~~ Froomside shone, the hedgebirds raised a song;
And later Hodge, upon the midday stroke
Returned the lane along,

Low murmuring: "O this bitter scene,
And thrice accurst horizon hung with gloom!
How deadly like this sky, these fields, these trees,
To trappings of the tomb!"

The Beldame then: "The fool & blind!
Such mad perverseness who may apprehend?"—
"Nay; there's no madness in it; thou shalt find
My Law there," said her friend.

"When Hodge went forth 'twas to his Love,
To make her, ere this eve, his wedded prize,
And Earth, despite the heaviness above,
Was bright as Paradise.

"But I sent on my messenger
With cunning arrows poisonous & keen
To take forthwith her laughing life from her,
And dull her little een,

And

" And white her cheek, & still her breath,
Ere her too buoyant Hodge had reached her side;
So, when he came, he clasped her but in death,
And never as his bride.

" And there's no humour, as I said;
Thy dreary dawn he saw as gleaming gold,
And in thy glistening green & radiant red
Funereal gloom & cold."

The Tree

An old Man's story.

Its roots are bristling in the air
Like some mad Earth-god's spiny hair;
The loud Southwester's swell & yell
Smote it at midnight, & it fell.
Thus ends the tree
Where Someone sat with me.

ii

Its boughs, which none but darers trod,
A child may step on from the sod,
And twigs that earliest meet the dawn
Are lit the last upon the lawn.
Cart off the tree
Beneath whose trunk sat we!

iii.

Yes, there we sat: she cooed content,
And bats ringed round, & daylight went;
The gnarl, our seat, is wrenched & sunk,
Prone, that queer pocket in the trunk
Where lay the Key
To her pale mystery.

iv.

iv.

"Years back, within this pocket-hole
I found, my Love, a hurried scrawl
Meant not for me"; ~~to her~~ at length said I;
"I glanced thereat, & let it lie:
The words were three —
'Beloved, I agree.'

V.

"Who placed it there; to what request
It gave assent, I never guessed.
Some prayer of some hot-heart, no doubt,
To some coy maiden hereabout,
Just as, maybe,
With you, Sweet Heart, & me."

VI.

She waited, till with quickened breath
She spoke, as one who banisheth
Reserves that lovecraft heeds so well,
To ease some mighty wish to tell:
"'Twas I," said she,
"Who wrote thus clinchingly."

VII

"My lover's wife — aye, wife! — knew nought
Of what we felt, & bore, & thought.....

He'd

He'd said: I wed with thee or die;
She stands between, 'tis true. But why?
Do thou agree,
And – she shall cease to be.

viii

"How I held back, how love supreme
Involved me madly in his scheme
Why should I say?.... I wrote assent
(You found it him) to his intent.....
She – died.... But he
Came not to wed with me.

ix.

"I shrink not. Love! – Had these eyes seen
But once thine own, such had not been!
But we were strangers.... Thus the plot
Cleared passion's path. – Why came he not
To wed with me?....
He wived the ~~gallows~~ gibbet-tree."

x.

Under that oak of heretofore
Sat Sweetheart mine with me no more:
By many a Fiord, & Strom, & Fleuve
Have I since wandered..... Soon, for love,
Distraught went she –
'Twas said for love of me.

Raeburn

Her Late Husband

(Kings-Hintock, 182-)

"No – not where I shall make my own:
But dig his grave just by
The woman's with the initialed stone,
As near as he can lie,
After whose death he seemed to ail,
Though none considered why.

—

"And when I also claim a nook
And your feet tread me in,
Beston me, under my old name,
Among my kith & kin,
That strangers gazing may not dream
I did a husband win."

—

"Widow, your wish shall be obeyed;
Though I thought certainly
You'd lay him where your folk are laid,
And your grave, too, will be,
As custom hath it; you to right,
And on the left hand he."

—

"Aye

"Aye, Sexton; such the Hintock rule,
And none has saw it nay;
But now it haps a native here
Eschews that ancient way.....
And it may be, some Christmas night,
When angels walk, they'll say:

"'O strange interment! Curlyew lands
Afford few types thereof;
Here is a man who takes his rest
Beside his very Love,
Beside the one who was his wife
By our sight ups above!'"

Here is the ancient floor,
Footworn & Lotlomed & thin.
Here was the former door
Where the dead feet walked in.

—

She sat here in her chair,
Smiling into the fire;
He who played stood there,
Bowing it higher & higher.

—

Childlike I danced in a dream;
Blessings emblazoned that day;
Everything glowed with a gleam;
Yet we were looking away!

Paterson

~~De Profundis~~. ~~In Tenebris~~ 128

I.

Small type "Percussus sum sicut foenum, et aruit cor meum."
Ps. CI.

Winterthine nights;
But my bereavement-pain
It cannot bring again:
Twice no one dies.

Flower-~~buds~~ petals flee;
But, since it once hath been,
No more that severing ~~parting~~ scene
Can harrow me.

Birds faint in dread:
I shall not lose old strength
In the lone frost's black length:
Strength long since fled!

Leaves freeze to dun;
But friends can not turn cold
This season as of old
For him with none.

Tempests may scath;
But love can not make smart
Again this year his heart
Who no heart hath.

Black is night's cope;
But death will not appal
One who, past doublings all
Waits in unhope.

~~De Profundis~~ ~~In Tenebris~~

II.

"~~Quare fremuerunt gentes, et populi meditati sunt inania? Ps. II~~. Considerabam ad dexteram, et videbam; et non erat qui cognosceret me.... Non est qui requirat animam meam.
— Ps. CXLI.

When the clouds' swoln bosoms echo back the shouts of the many & strong
That things are all as they best may be, save a few to be right ere long,
And my eyes have not the vision in them to discern demonstration so clear,
The blot seems straightway in me alone; ~~one would be better he,~~ one better be, were not here!

The ~~strenuous supporters~~ stout upstanders say, All's well with us: ~~they have nought to rue~~ ruers have nought to rue!
And what the ~~regnant~~ potent say so oft, can it fail to be somewhat true?
~~Breezily~~ Breezily go they, ~~breezily~~ breezily come; their ~~fame stretches far & wide~~ dust smokes around their career,
Till I think I am one born out of due time who has no ~~right to be~~ calling here.

Their dawns bring lusty joys, it seems; their eves exultance sweet;
Our times are blessed times, they cry: Life shapes it as is most meet;
And nothing is much the matter; there are many smiles to a tear;
Then what is the matter is I, I say. ~~Cursed Curse~~, why should such an one be here!....

~~Let him Hasten~~ Let him ~~trample fast~~ to whose ears the Low-voiced Best seems stilled by the clash of the First,
Who holds that if way to the Better there be, it exacts a full look at the Worst,
Who feels that delight is a delicate growth cramped by crookedness, custom, & fear,
~~Get him up & be gone as one~~ up & be gone as one shaped awry; ~~or as weird ghosts wandering here!~~ unwished, unwanted,
he disturbs the order here!

1895–6.

~~De Profundis~~ ~~In Tenebris~~

III.

small type "Heu mihi, quia incolatus meus prolongatus est! Habitavi
cum habitantibus Cedar; multum incola fuit anima mea."
Ps. CXIX.

There have been times when I well might have passed & the ending have come –
Points in my path when the dark might have stolen on me, artless, unrueing –
Ere I had learnt that the world was a welter of futile doing:
Such had been times when I well might have passed, & the ending have come!

Say, on the noon when the half-sunny hours told that April was nigh,
And I upgathered & cast forth the snow from the crocus-border,
Fashioned & furbished the soil into a summer-seeming order,
Glowing in gladsome faith that I quickened the year thereby.

Or on that loneliest of eves when afar & benighted we stood,
She who upheld me & I, in the midmost of Egdon together,
Confident I in her watching & ward through the blackening heather,
Deeming her matchless in might & with measureless scope endued.

Or on that winter-wild night when, reclined by the chimney-nook quoin,
Slowly a drowse overgat me, the smallest & feeblest of folk there,
Weak from my baptism of pain; when at times & anon I awoke there –
Heard of a world wheeling on, with no listing or longing to join.

Even ~~as I~~

Even then! while unweeting
~~that~~ that vision could vex or that Knowledge could numb;
~~Withers~~ That ~~fruits of this life shrunken~~ sweets to the mouth in the belly are bitter, & ~~black~~ tart, & untoward, lowered,
Then, on some dim-coloured scene should my briefly raised curtain have,
Then might the Voice that is Law have said "Cease!" & the ending have come.

1896.

Aprem.

~~Abbeadonias Erbusten~~.

The Church-Builder

i.

The church ~~stings~~ flings forth a battled shade
Over the moon-blanched sward;
The church; my gift; whereto I paid
My all in hand & hoard:
Lavished my gains
With stintless pains
To glorify the Lord.

ii

I squared the broad foundations in
Of ashlared masonry;
I modelled mullions thick & thin,
Hewed fillet & ogee.
I circleted
Each sculptured head
With nimb & canopy.

iii

I called in many a craftsmaster
To fix emblazoned glass,
To figure Cross & Sepulchre
On dossal, boss, & brass.

Ivy

My gold all spent,
My jewels went
To gem the cups of glass.

iv.

I borrowed deep to carve the screen
And raise the ivories Rood;
I parted with my small demesne
To make my offrings good.
Heir-looms unpriced
I sacrificed
Until debt-free I stood.

v.

So closed the task. "Deathless the Creed
Here substanced!" said my soul:
"I heard the bidden to this deed,
And straight obeyed the call.
Illume this fane,
That not in vain
I built it, Lord of all!"

vi.

But, as it chanced me, then & there
Did dire misfortunes burst;
My home went waste for lack of care,
My sons rebelled & curst;

Till I confesses
That aims the best
Were looking like the worst.

VII.

Enkindled by my votive work
No burning faith I find;
The deeper thinkers sneer & smirk,
And give my toil no mind;
From nod & wink
I read they think
That I am fool & blind.

VIII.

My gift to God seems futile, quite;
The world moves as erstwhile;
And powerful wrong on feeble right
Tramples in olden style.
My faith burns down,
I see no crown;
But Cares, & Griefs, & Guile.

IX.

So now, the remedy? Yea, this:—
I gently swing the Door
Here, of my fane — no soul to wis —
And cross the patterned floor
To the rood-screen
That stands between
The nave and inner chore.

X.

x.

The rich red windows dim the moon,
But little light need I:
I mount the prie-dieu, lately hewn
From woods of rarest dye;
Then from below
My garment, so,
I draw this cord, & tie

xi.

One end thereof around the beam
Midway 'twixt Cross & truss:
I noose the nethermost extreme,
And in ten seconds thus
I journey hence—
To that land whence
No rumour reaches us.

xii.

Well: Here at ~~no~~ morn they'll light on one
Dangling in mockery
Of what he spent his substance on
Blindly & uselessly!.....
"He might", they'll say,
"Have built, some way,
A cheaper gallows-tree!"

The Lost Pyx.

A Mediaeval Legend ※

Some say the spot is banned; that the pillar Cross-o-Hand
Attests to a deed of hell;
But of else than of bale is the mystic tale
That ancient Vale-folk tell.

Ere Cernel's Abbey ceased hereabout there dwelt a priest,
(In later life sub-prior
Of the brotherhood there, whose bones are now bare
In the field that was Cernel choir.)

One night in his cell at the foot of yon dell
The priest heard a frequent cry:
"Go, father, in haste to the cot on the waste
And shrive a man waiting to die."

※ On a lonely table-land above the Vale of Blackmore, between High-Stoy & Bubb-Down hills, & commanding in clear weather views that extend from the English to the Bristol Channel, stands a pillar apparently mediæval, called Cross-and-Hand or Christ-in-Hand. Among other stories of its origin a local tradition preserves the one here given.

Said

Said the priest in a shout to the caller without,
"The night howls, the tree-trunks bow;
One may barely by day track so rugged a way,
And can I then do so now?"

No further word from the dark was heard,
And the priest moved never a limb;
And he slept & dreamed; till a Visage seemed
To frown from Heaven at him.

In a sweat he arose; & the storm shrieked shrill,
And smote as in savage joy;
While High-stay trees changed to Bubb-Down Hill,
And Bubb-Down to High-stay.

There seemed not a holy thing in hail,
Nor shape of light or love,
From the Abbey north of Blackmore Vale
To the Abbey south thereof.

Yet he plodded thence through the dark immense,
And with many a stumbling stride
Through copse & brier climber nigh & nigher
To the cot & the sick man's side.

when

When he would have unslung the Vessels upheld
To his arm in the steep ascent,
He made loud moan: the Pyx was gone
Of the Blessed Sacrament.

Then in dolorous dread he beat his head:
"No earthly price or peer
Is the thing I've lost in tempest-tossed,
But the Body of Christ himself!"

He thought of the Visage this dream revealed,
And turned towards whence he came,
Hands groping the ground along foot-track & field,
And head in a heat of shame.

Till here on the hill he twixt will & will
He noted a clear straight ray
Stretching down from the sky to a spot hard by
Which shone with the light of day.

And gathered around the illumined ground
Were common beasts & rare,
All kneeling at gaze, & in pause profound
Attent on an Object there.

'Twas

'Twas the Pyx, unharmed mid the circling rows
Of Blackmore's hairy throng.
Whereof were oxen, sheep, & does,
And hares from the brakes among,

And badgers grey, & conies keen,
And squirels of the tree,
And many a member seldom seen
Of Nature's family.

The ireful winds that scoured & swept
Through coppice, clump, & dell,
Within that holy circle slept
Calm as in hermit's cell.

When the priest bent likewise to the sod
And thanked the Lord of Love,
And Blessed Mary Mother of God,
And all the saints above.

And turning straight with his priceless freight
He reached the dying one,

whose

Whose passing sprite had been stayed for the rite
Without which bliss hath none.

And when by grace the priest won place,
And served the Abbey well,
He reared this stone to mark where shone
That midnight miracle.

from

Tess's Lament.

i

O would that folk forgot me quite,
Forgot me quite!
O would that I could shrink from sight,
And no more see the sun.
Would it were time to say farewell,
To claim my nook, to need my knell,
Time for them all to stand & tell
Of my days work as done.

ii

Ah! dairy where I lived so long,
I lived so long;
Where I would rise up stanch & strong,
And lie down hopefully.
'Twas there within the chimney-seat
He watched me to the slow clock-beat—
Loved me, & learnt to call me sweet,
And whispered words to me.

iii

And now he's gone; & now he's gone;.....
And now he's gone!
The flowers we potted p'raps p'rhaps are thrown
To rot upon the farm.
And where we had our supper-fire
May now grass grow nettle, dock, & brier,
And all the place be mould & mire
So cozy once & warm.

iv.

iv.

And it was I who did it all,
Who did it all;
'Twas I who made the blow to fall
On him who thought no guile.
Well; it is finished — past, & he
Has left me to my misery,
And I must take my Cross on me
For wronging him awhile.

v.

How gay we looked that day we wed,
That day we wed!
"May joy be with ye!" all o'm said
A-standing by the durn.
I wonder what they say o's now,
And if they know my lot; & how
She feels who milks my favourite cow,
And takes my place at churn!

vi.

It wears me out to think of it,
To think of it;
I cannot bear my fate as writ,
I'd have my life unbe;
Would turn my memory to a blot,
Make every relic of me rot,
My doings be as they were not,
And what they've brought to me!

The Supplanter. ~~A Lesbian Legend~~ ¶ A Tale.

i.

He bends his travel-tarnished feet
To where she wastes in clay:
From day-dawn until eve he fares
Along the wintry way;
From day-dawn until eve repairs
Unto ~~the~~ her mound to pray.

ii

"Are these the gravestone shapes that meet
My forward-straining view?
Or forms that cross a window-blind
In circle, knot, & queue:
Gay forms, that ~~in~~ cross & whirl & wind
To music throbbing through?"—

iii

"The Keeper of the Fields of Tombs
Dwells by its gateway-pier:
He celebrates with feast & dance
His daughter's twentieth year:
He celebrates with wine of France
The birthday of his dear."

The

iv.

" The gates are shut when eve ~~rises~~ rising glooms;
Lay down your wreath, sad wight;
To-morrow is a time more fit
For placing flowers aright:
The ~~daylight~~ morning is the time for it;
Come, wake with us to-night!" —

V.

He grounds his wreath, & enters in,
And sits, & shares their cheer.
"I fain would foot with you, young man,
Before all others here;
I fain would foot it for a span
With such a cavalier!"

VI

She waxes, clasps, nor fails to win
His ~~cold~~ first-unwilling hand:
The merry music strikes its staves,
The dancers quickly band;
And with the damsel of the graves
~~The young man~~ He duly takes his stand.

VII

"You dance divinely, stranger swain,
Such grace I've never known.

Olwyn

O longer stay! Breathe ~~Say~~ not adieu
And leave me here alone!
O longer stay: When he true
Whose heart is all your own!"

viii

"I mark a phantom through the pane,
That beckons in despair,
Its mouth all drawn with heavy moan —
Her to whom once I sware!" —
"Nay; 'tis the lately carven stone
Of some strange girl laid there!" —

ix

"I see white flowers upon the floor
Betrodden to a clot;
My wreath were they?" — "Nay; love me much,
Swear you'll forget me not!
'Twas but a wreath. Full many such
Are brought here & forgot."

. . . . . .

x.

The watches of the night grow thoan,
He rises ere the sun;
"Now could I kill thee here!" he says,
"For winning me from one

Who

Who ever in her living days
Was pure as cloistered nun!"

xi

She covers, & he takes his track
Afar for many a mile,
For evermore to be apart
From her who could beguile
His senses by her burning heart,
And win his love awhile.

xii

A year: & he is travelling back
To her who wastes in clay:
From day-dawn until eve he fares
Along the wintry way,
From day-dawn until eve repairs
Unto her mound to pray.

xiii

And there he sets him to fulfil
His frustrate first intent:
And lay upon her bed, at last,
The offering earlier meant:
When, on his ~~bending~~ stooping figure, ghast
And haggard eyes are bent.

xiv

XIV

"O surely for a little while
You can be kind to me!
For do you love her, do you hate,
She knows not — cares not she:
Only the living feel the weight
Of loveless misery!

XV

"I own my fault; I've paid its cost;
Being outcast, shamed, & bare:
I give you daily my whole heart,
Your babe my tender care,
I pour you prayers: & aye to part
Is more than I can bear!"

XVI

He turns remorseless — passion-tossed:
"I know you not!" he cries,
"Nor know your child. I knew this maid,
But she's in Paradise!"
And swiftly in the winter shade
He breaks from her & flies.

Imitations, etc.

Sapphic Fragment.

" ~~written long ago, but unpublished, for the amusement of friends~~ ~~Robert Lytton~~.

Dead shalt thou lie; and nought
~~Those~~ Be told of thee or thought,
For thou hast plucked not of the Muses' tree:
And even in Hades' halls
Amidst thy fellow thralls
No friendly shade thy shade shall company!

Catullus: XXXI

(After passing Sirmione. April 1887.)

Sirmio, thou dearest dear of strands
That Neptune strokes in lake & sea,
With what high joy from strangest lands
Doth thy old friend set foot on thee!
Yea, barely seems it true to me
That no Bithynia holds me now,
But calmly & assuringly
Around me stretchest homely Thou.

Is there a scene more sweet than when
Our clinging cares are undercast,
And, worn by alien moils & men,
The long untrodden sill repasses,
We press the pined for kindly couch at last,
And find a full repayment there?
Then hail, sweet Sirmio; thou that wast,
And art, mine own unrivalled Fair!

After Schiller.

Knight, a true sisterlove
This heart retains;
Ask me no other love,
That way lie pains!

Calm must I view thee come,
Calm see thee go;
Tale-telling tears of thine
I must not know!

× × × ×

From Song. ~~Heine~~ Heine.

~~Die Heimkehr~~

I scanned her picture, dreaming;
Till each dear line & hue
Was imaged, to my seeming,
As if it lived anew.

—

Her lips began to borrow
Their former wondrous smile;
Her fair eyes, faint with sorrow,
Grew sparkling as erstwhile.

—

Such tears as often ran not
Ran then, my Love, for thee;
And O — believe I can not
That thou art lost to me!

~~After~~

From Victor Hugo.

Child, were I king, I'd yield my royal rule,
my Chaist ~~Crown~~, sceptre, ~~knee-devotion~~ ~~vassal-service~~ due,
My ~~chaunts~~ crown, my porphyry-ed basin'd waters cool,
My fleets, ~~that excites~~ whereto it is the sea, in lieu a pool,
For a glance from you!

Love, were I God, the earth and its heaving airs,
Angels, the demons, abject under me,
Vast chaos with its teeming wombly lairs,
Time, space, all vowed! ~~and~~ give — aye, upper spheres,
For a kiss from thee!

Cardinal Bembo's Epitaph on Raphael.

Here's one in whom Nature feared — faint at such vying —
Eclipse while he lived, and decease at his dying.

Retrospect.

~~Conclusion~~.

"I have lived with Shades"

i.

I have lived with shades so long,
And talked to them so oft,
Since forth from cot & croft
I went mankind among,
That sometimes they
In their dim style
Will pause awhile
To hear my say;

ii

And take me by the hand,
And lead me through their rooms
In the To-be, where Dooms
Half-wove & shapeless stand;
And show from there
The dwindled dust
And rot & rust
Of things that were.

...

iii

"Now turn", ~~said~~ spake they to me
One day: "Look whence we came,
And signify his name
Who gazes thence at thee."—

"nor

"— Nor name nor race
Know I, or can,"
I said, "Of man
So commonplace.

IV.

"He moves me not at all;
I note no ray or jot
Of rareness in his lot,
Or star exceptional.

Into the Dim
Dead throngs around
He'll sink, nor sound
Be left of him."

V.

"Yet," said they, "his frail speech,
~~Doth it not chord with~~
~~Shows accents pitched like~~ Hath ..... mine —
Thy mould and his define
A likeness each to each —

But go! Deep pain
Alas, unwed he
His name to thee,
And told in vain!"

Feb 2. 1899.

Memory & I.

"O Memory, where is now my youth,
Who used to say that life was truth?"

"I saw him in a crumbled cot
Beneath a tottering tree;
That he as phantom lingers there
I only/p Known to ~~me~~ me."

—

"O Memory, where is now my joy,
Who lived with me in sweet employ?"

"I saw him in gray gardens gone,
Where laughter used to be;
That he as phantom wanders there
Is known to none but me."

—

"O Memory, where is now my hope,
Who ~~fluttered~~ charged with deeds my skill ~~telescope~~ stumbling?"

"I saw

"I saw her in a tomb of tones,
Where dreams are wont to be;
That she as spectre haunteth there
Is only known to me."

"O Memory, where is now my faith,
One time a champion, now a wraith?"

"I saw her in a ravaged aisle,
Sunken on bended knee;
That her poor ghost outflickers there
Is known to none but me".

"O Memory, where is now my love,
That rayed me as a god above?"

"I saw him by an ageing shape
Where beauty used to be;
That his fond phantom lingers here
Is only known to me."

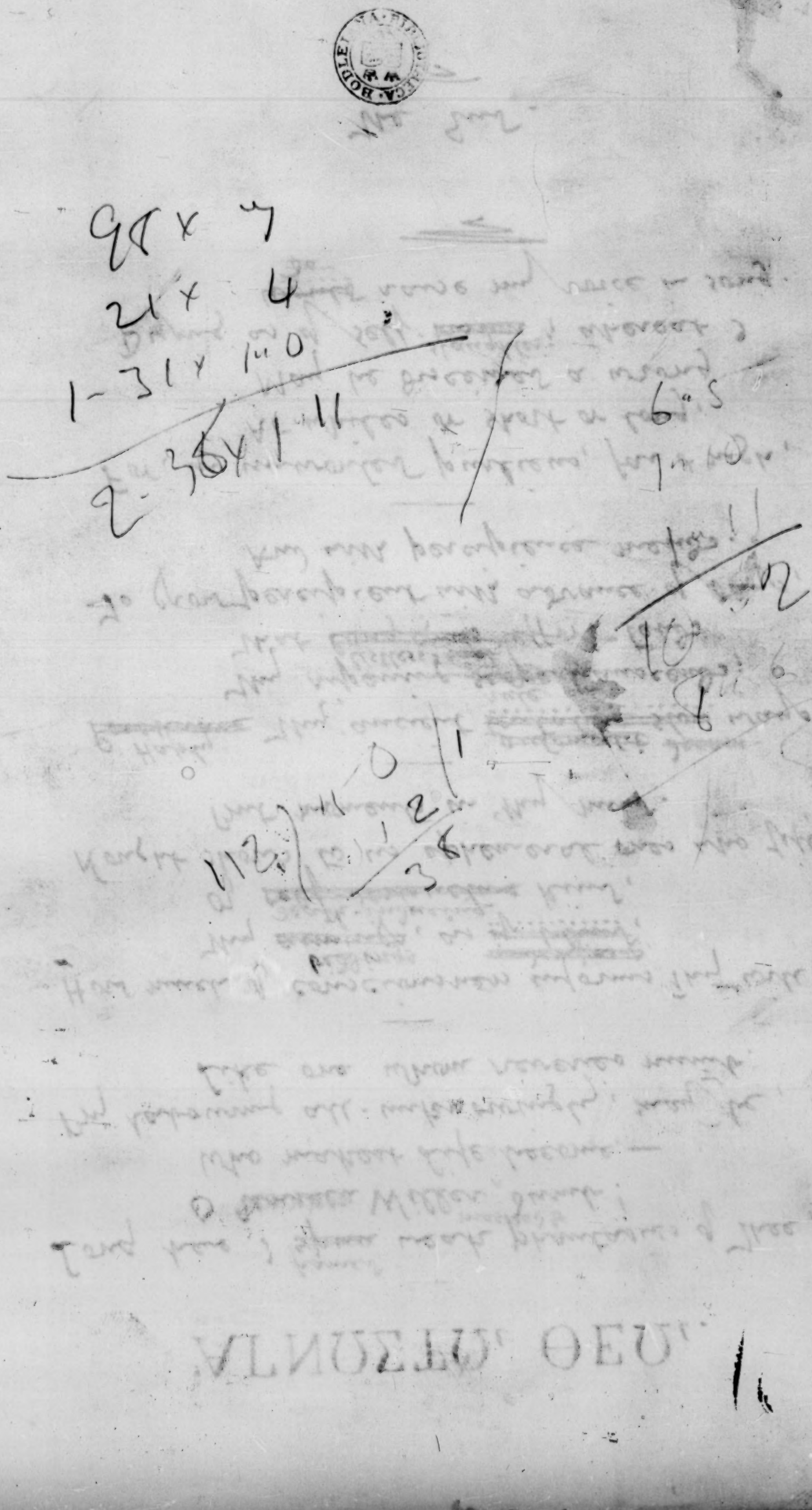
ΆΓΝΩΣΤΩι ΘΕΩι.

Long have I ~~[illegible]~~ framed weak phantasies of Thee,
O ~~[illegible]~~ Willer, masked & dumb!
Who makest Life become,—
By labouring all-unknowingly, may be,
Like one whom reveries numb.

How much of consciousness informs Thy will,
Thy ~~[illegible]~~ biddings, as ~~[illegible]~~,
Of ~~[illegible]~~ death-inducing kind,
Nought shows to us ephemeral ones who fill
But moments in Thy mind.

~~Happily~~ Thy ancient, ~~[illegible]~~ dream-
Thy ripening ~~[illegible]~~ rule transcends;
That ~~[illegible]~~ listless effort tends
To grow percipient with advance of days,
And with percipience mends.

For, in unwonted purlieus, far & nigh,
At whiles or short or long,
May be discerned a wrong
Dying as of self-~~[illegible]~~ slaughter; whereat I
~~Would~~ raise my voice in song.

The End.

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